

# The Listener

Published every Thursday by the British Broadcasting Corporation



Autumn in the farmyard: the courteous geese (see page 494)

In this number:

The Tools of Victory (Sir John Slessor)

The Good Life—I (Alan Pryce-Jones)

Three Poems on Greek Themes (Sir Herbert Read)



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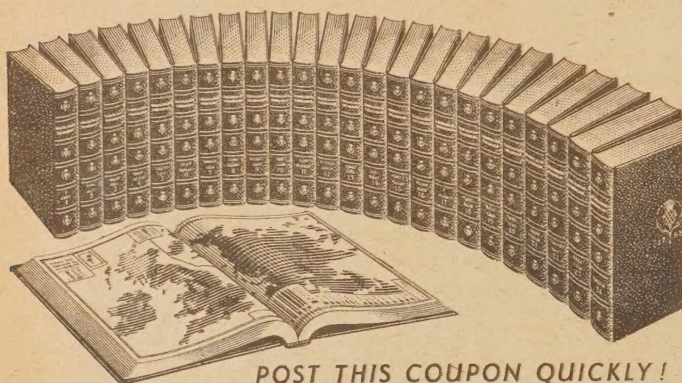
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Imperial Chemical Industries Limited





# The Listener

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## CONTENTS

THE WORLD TODAY:				BIOGRAPHY:			
The Tools of Victory (Sir John Slessor) ... .. 487				Portraits from Memory—VI. George Santayana (Bertrand Russell, O.M.) ... .. 503			
The Negro in the United States (Denis Brogan) ... .. 489				NEWS DIARY AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE WEEK ... .. 504			
THE LISTENER:				PARTY POLITICAL BROADCAST (Rt. Hon. C. R. Attlee, O.M., C.H., M.P.) ... .. 506			
Local History ... .. 492				LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:			
P.S.A. ? ... .. 492				From Margaret Knight, Bernard R. Davies, Victor Pasmore, W. Ohly, Sir Robert Fraser, Ernest Milton, Edward Atiyah, and J. M. Cameron ... .. 507			
What They Are Saying (foreign broadcasts) ... .. 492				GARDENING:			
DID YOU HEAR THAT?				Growing Bulbs Indoors (Charles Funke) ... .. 511			
Bradshaw and His Time-table (Charles Dimont) ... .. 493				ART:			
Lecturing to the Troops (Philip Hope-Wallace) ... .. 493				Round the London Galleries (David Sylvester) ... .. 512			
Riding in the Grand National (John Hislop) ... .. 494				LITERATURE:			
The Intelligent Goose (Ian Finlay) ... .. 494				The Listener's Book Chronicle ... .. 513			
THE GOOD LIFE—I				New Novels (Graham Hough) ... .. 517			
The Classical Way (Alan Pryce-Jones) ... .. 495				CRITIC ON THE HEARTH:			
HISTORY:				Television Documentary (Reginald Pound) ... .. 518			
Annals of the Parish (W. G. Hoskins) ... .. 496				Television Drama (Philip Hope-Wallace) ... .. 518			
POEMS:				Sound Drama (J. C. Trewin) ... .. 519			
Three Poems on Greek Themes (Sir Herbert Read) ... .. 498				The Spoken Word (John Pringle) ... .. 520			
A Benefit Night at the Opera (Martin Bell) ... .. 511				Music (Alan Frank) ... .. 520			
MUSIC:				BROADCAST SUGGESTIONS FOR THE HOUSEWIFE ... .. 523			
Social Aspects of Southern African Music (Hugh Tracey) ... .. 499				NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS ... .. 523			
The French Revelation (Norman Suckling) ... .. 521				CROSSWORD NO. 1,221 ... .. 523			
ARCHITECTURE:							
Lydiard Tregoz, Wiltshire (Sir Hugh Casson) ... .. 501							

## The Tools of Victory

Broadcast by SIR JOHN SLESSOR on the anniversary of the Battle of Britain

AT this time, when we commemorate the great deliverance of the Battle of Britain, our thoughts naturally turn to the words of the Prime Minister's splendid contemporary tribute. For most of us, the 'few' to whom he voiced a nation's debt were the pilots, those men whose 'frozen trails looped white across the blue' we watched with bated breath thirteen years ago: their fame is secure indeed.

There were others, to whom it was not given to share directly in that high adventure, but who surely have their place among the few to whom the many owe so much. The delayed action of long selfless years of strain and overwork still adds names to the roll of those who died in battle. And high among those names will stand that of Wilfrid Freeman. It was to him, more than any other man, that the nation and the R.A.F. owed the fact that the pilots of Fighter Command never ran short of those aircraft whose names—'Hurricane' and 'Spitfire'—are now as much a part of British history as Nelson's *Victory* and *Royal Sovereign*.

The fighter pilots obviously could not have done the job if they had not been given the tools. I want here to discuss this tremendous business of aircraft production, which was Freeman's massive contribution to victory and is his prime memorial.

The first step in the process is the job of the Air Staff, what we call 'operational requirements': what sort of aircraft we want; what performance—that is, speed, range, ceiling and so on; what armament we want—how many guns of what calibre, or rockets, or, in these days, air-to-air guided missiles; what loads of bombs

and what sort; what radio and radar equipment—all that sort of thing.

It is not easy. In these days, even before the last war, the cycle of production—that is, the time it takes for an aircraft to get from the drawing board into a squadron, so to speak—is measured in nearly as many years as it took months with the small, simple aeroplane of thirty years ago. That means the Air Staff have to think a long way ahead, and not only use their imagination and their knowledge of what a potential enemy is up to, but also know what is technically practicable and how long it is going to take to develop it. And then there is the awful decision as to when to harden one's heart and go to production, and wait no longer for the 'something still better' that is always just round the corner.

Before the war, that process and the subsequent business of research, development, and production, were all the responsibility of the Air Ministry. In 1940 the Ministry of Aircraft Production came into being (as you probably know, since the war it has been merged with the Ministry of Supply) and they took over responsibility for research and development and production. So, from then on, the Air Staff had to work in the closest day-to-day co-operation with the M.A.P., as it was called. And Britain was indeed fortunate in having, at a supreme crisis in her history, Freeman, a man of genius who not only laid the foundation of the production programme in the Air Ministry before the changeover, but was later to steer it to its ultimate development as Chief Executive in the M.A.P.



I believe I can best give you an idea of the problems of an air production programme, and of the qualities required to solve them, by telling you something about that man. I suppose no other among the great men of the late war—and I choose that description deliberately, well knowing that it is commonly over-worked—was so little known to the public as Wilfrid Freeman. He had a scornful horror of personal publicity. But, though there have been other famous supply officers, and other regular soldiers who have gone on to achieve great reputations in business or industry, Freeman was pre-eminent among both. It was relatively late in life that he first embarked on the great industrial adventure which is a modern armament production programme. He was forty-eight when he came from being Commandant of the Staff College to the Air Council as Air Member for Research and Development at the outset of the Air Force expansion in 1936. And in June 1938 that appointment was extended to include production. So Freeman became the first man to be responsible for the whole process, from research to the production of the finished article.

He had been one of the pioneers of military aviation, and had made a great name for himself in the Kaiser's war. It was my good fortune to know him from early days, when he came out as a young Squadron-Commander to the Middle East in 1915; and even then there was no mistaking that he was something out of the ordinary. In later years, as Assistant Commandant at the Staff College, on the Air Staff under Trenchard, in command of the Central Flying School, or as Air Officer Commanding in Palestine, Wilfrid's personality and boundless energy were an inspiration and a challenge to all of us who worked with him or under him. He was as quick as lightning; the living antithesis of pomposity; a great lover of books and music, and a man of culture in the best sense of that often abused word. He was intensely human, critical but never unkind, with an impish, unpredictable humour and a capacity for selfless loyalty, that were at the same time the despair and delight of those to whom he gave his friendship.

The Battle of Britain fighters had been designed and brought to the verge of production before Freeman came into the Air Ministry. The decision to establish 'shadow' factories, based on the motor-car industry, was also taken before his time. But the development and production of the Hurricanes and Spitfires were his responsibility: indeed, that is true of all new types from 1936 to the middle of 1940. He sponsored the great extensions of the 'shadow' factories, and the creation of a vast reserve of manufacturing capacity, and vigorously nourished the design resources of what were known as the 'family' firms. There were many decisions of vital importance during the years 1936 to 1939 for which the responsibility and the credit lay with Freeman. Hundred-octane fuel, the variable-pitch propeller, the air rocket, for instance; and, above all, the initiation of the four-engined bomber policy. I well remember, as Director of Plans, the excitement and interest of discussing with him his proposals for the first production orders of those aircraft, which were destined to have such a tremendous influence on the outcome of the war.

An essential quality in any man in his position is willingness to accept responsibility, to back his own judgment, and to run risks. That was a quality with which Freeman was supremely endowed. Some of his most important and fruitful decisions, such as to order the Mosquito or go ahead with Whittle's jet, were taken against formidable technical advice, and involved running real risks.

Between his appointment in 1936 and the time when in 1940 he became Vice-Chief of the Air Staff to Portal, the aircraft industry multiplied at least eightfold, and the monthly output of operational types had risen from a few score to about 800. Even more important, in that period there was a veritable revolution in technique, with the introduction of the all-metal, stressed-skin, high-speed monoplane. That

was a reflection of another of Freeman's characteristics—his invariable insistence on quality, if necessary at the expense of quantity. Nowhere is that more important than in air warfare, but it took a man of Freeman's calibre to go on insisting on it, and get his way, in times when popular and political pressure was all for bigger and better numbers.

By 1940 there had been built up under the Air Ministry a working organisation which made the transition to a separate Ministry a relatively, easy matter. A man who was in a better position than most people to know—Lord Hives of Rolls-Royce—has written to me: 'It was the expansion which was carried out under Wilfrid's direction in 1937-39 which enabled the Battle of Britain to be won. Without that foresight and imagination, no efforts in 1940 would have yielded any results'.

From 1940 to 1942 Freeman was Vice-Chief of Air Staff and directed the internal policy governing the war-time expansion of the R.A.F., which was so ably carried into effect by his colleague, Air Marshal Courtney, the war-time Air Member for Supply and Organisation. Lord Portal has said of him: 'In this work, as in all he did, Wilfrid Freeman was a tower of strength. He was brilliantly successful in foreseeing

the needs of the Service and in weighing the many conflicting factors and opposing views which had to be taken into account. He showed real genius for distinguishing what was right from what was merely clever, for finding the truth and exposing the superficial and the specious. And he displayed the most steadfast courage in making and defending many crucial and difficult decisions'.

Two years later, at the insistence of the Prime Minister, he went back to the great task of production, as Chief Executive at the M.A.P. I think his experience as V.C.A.S. was useful to him there. He had seen how essential it was for the Air Staff to have a realistic forecast of production, on which to plan and organise the expansion of the Service, in place of the optimistic amateur estimates with which we had been familiar. His most conspicuous achievement in this second period was, of course, output—production almost doubled between 1942 and 1944. This meant piloting the industry through all the crises and shortages that are bound to arise in war time to the smooth and efficient peak of 1944.

It was not given to Freeman to stand in the limelight as the commander of great air forces in battle. But the task of providing the men with the tools calls for qualities no less great, and rarer. Freeman had the essential qualities of character, and the basic wisdom. He knew how to get on

with other people, how to work a priority system with due regard to the needs of other branches of the war effort as well as his own. He had an unerring instinct for the real essentials; he knew that the best is the enemy of the good. And his understanding of technical problems—without being himself a technician—gained him the complete confidence of the industry. Above all, though obviously he could be known personally only to a few, his personality inspired real devotion right down the line: in the R.A.F., among Civil Servants, and in the industry.

Freeman would be the last man to claim all the credit. He was fortunate in serving under Ministers like Swinton and Stafford Cripps. He had some supremely able colleagues: men like Craven and Rowlands, Henry Self and Plowden, Lemon, Tizard and Sorley. And the industry itself threw up men of genius like Hives and Dobson, 'A.R.' Smith and Hennessy, the Nelson-Sheffield combination, and the de Havilland team. But I believe that no one who saw the Ministry of Aircraft Production at work in Freeman's time will be found to deny that virtually all the crucial decisions were taken, and all the risks faced, by Wilfrid Freeman.

So when, as each September comes round, we pay our tribute to the pilots of the Battle of Britain, and the airmen who kept their aircraft flying, let us remember also the men behind the front who gave them the tools of victory.—*Home Service*



Sir Wilfrid Freeman in 1942, when he was appointed Chief Executive at the Ministry of Aircraft Production



# The Negro in the United States

By DENIS BROGAN

**T**HOMAS JEFFERSON was the third President of the United States and one of the three Americans that Americans most consent to honour. He was also the author of the Declaration of Independence, in which he declared: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness'. Thomas Jefferson was also a slave-holder who did not emancipate his slaves till his death-bed. And also Thomas Jefferson said: 'When I reflect on slavery and consider that God is just, I tremble for my country'. Then, as now, the Negro question, the question of status of the descendants of those slaves, is the great American case of conscience.

It is easy, and I will in fact try, to show that there has been an immense improvement, even in my lifetime, in my knowledge of America, in the position of the American Negro; but it would be dishonest to pretend that that position is satisfactory or just, or in any way comes up, still, to the premises of the Declaration that they have an equal right with white people to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. A living Southerner, Thomas Sanction, who spent a great deal of his time fighting race inequality in the south and everywhere, made a very sage remark: 'We must remember that all white men at heart are sahibs, that every time you consciously treat a Negro as an equal you are in fact treating him as a non-equal. Until the white man begins to not-think about treating Negroes as equals, he is in fact treating them as unequal'. And the Negroes know that; they know that the most democratic white man, or almost all democratic white men, make a conscious effort to treat them as equals, and reasonably and rightly they resent it. That is one reason why some Negroes—not all, not most—rather prefer the old-fashioned staring down, superior attitude, to the offensively egalitarian attitude of people obviously making an effort to treat a human being as a human being.

That comes out in many ways in America. The most distinguished living American Negro is Dr. Ralph Bunche of the United Nations, recipient of the Nobel Prize, one of the great public servants

of the world, a man of great culture. He was offered a job of Assistant Secretary of State—and refused it. He never gave in public the reason for it, but I have good grounds for saying the reason was he, a Nobel Prizeman, would not go back to Washington as Assistant Secretary of State to a city in which there were restaurants he could not enter, schools his children could not go to, swimming pools he could not use.



The old way and the new: a railway station in the southern states of America, with separate entrances for white and coloured people—



—and non-discrimination in the U.S. army: a Negro officer inspecting the guard at an American military camp in Germany

He could stay, and has stayed, with the royal family of Sweden. Count Bernadotte was his chief; and the widow of Count Bernadotte came and stayed with the Bunches; in Washington she could have stayed only in a quarter of the city in which members of royal families, of Sweden or anywhere else, could normally stay. That is the first thing to say. The second thing to notice is that Ralph Bunche was offered the job of Assistant Secretary of State, that he did receive the Nobel Prize, that in effect in New York, in the United Nations, he suffers no visible discrimination at all. But the two things have to be got together. As in the case of Jefferson the promise of American life and the fulfilment are very different.

The next thing to notice is that probably, I should say certainly, this discrimination has as much an economic basis as a racial basis. Because in the United States there are two groups lower in the scale of social reward—shall I say?—than the Negroes: the Mexicans in Texas and other border states, and the Puerto Ricans in New York. The reason is not hard to explain. The American Negro is profoundly American, his native language is English, his culture is English; the efforts made to find African culture traits are very, very thin, very implausible. The Mexicans and the Puerto Ricans speak Spanish; they are outside the American tradition. They are technically white—in the case of the Puerto Ricans most of them are white—but they are more underprivileged than the Negroes are.

The two things—the status of the lowest levels of American economic life and the status of various races—must be separated. The case of the Mexicans, and still more the case of the Puerto Ricans in New York, shows that colour, race prejudice, is not the only thing



in it. One part of Harlem, in New York, for years returned to Congress a notorious fellow-traveller, an Italian. The Harlem Negroes did not vote for Vito Marcantonio—some did, he was a very effective Congressman, he worked hard—but his basic support came not from the Negroes but from a white population of underprivileged people, the Puerto Ricans, American citizens but not speaking English, not adjusted to American life.

The changes in the leadership of the American Negro in the last twenty or thirty years have been astonishing. There always were eminent American Negroes—Frederick Douglass during the Civil War, Booker Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois—but a great many American Negro leaders twenty or thirty years ago were in fact minor bosses. They could and did deliver the vote, for money, for minor awards. That has ceased. The Negro voter now is one of the most independent voters in the United States. He often votes, as they would say, for the race: that means for schools, hospitals, parks, slum clearance, and so forth. I know a case, for example, in northern California of an eminent and cultivated Negro minister who failed to deliver the vote of his congregation last year just because the congregation has passed beyond that kind of leadership. It was his son who told me, who was also resisting his father's leadership. That is to say, the Negro now is a mature American citizen. That is sometimes concealed by the fact that you hear of Father Divine; this other Negro thaumaturge in Chicago who got a mink coat. It must be remembered that a great part of Father Divine's congregation is in fact white.

Lastly—this is a point which perhaps wants emphasising—it is not true that the American communists recruit any considerable body of support from the American Negroes. As I say, in the one district of New York where they elected a fellow-traveller, his main support came from Puerto Ricans, white and Negro, most of them white. Richard Wright, the distinguished American Negro novelist, has spoken in his books and in conversation of the profound disillusionment that he and others went through when they discovered the American Communist Party was using them purely as an instrument, that the party cared nothing for the future or the prosperity or the happiness of the American Negro—they were tools. Many American Negroes who have become communists—and proportionately fewer have become communists than have whites—have left the party when they discovered they were merely tools.

### Protective Laws

What are the changes that have occurred in the status of the American Negro in the nearly thirty years since I first went to America? I want to call attention to one neglected factor, the law. The American Constitution laid down after the Civil War, both in amendments and in statutes, various protective laws for the American Negro. I do not think it is too offensive to say that these were ignored or evaded or the courts found reasons for not applying them. In modern times, in the last twenty years, the courts have applied them. They have been told, again and again: if you do this you will cause so much resentment that more harm than good will be done. This has not turned out to be true. The various decisions which began, before the New Deal, outlawing various legal devices to prevent the Negro voting in the South, had no result except that the Negro in the South votes more and more in every election. There was no reaction, there was no explosion of violent feeling; in fact, the Negro votes more and more, and my own opinion is he would not be voting nearly so much if the Supreme Court had not ignored the advice it got and had gone ahead and said, 'The law is . . .', 'The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments say this . . .', and these various devices are illegal. America is a law-respecting, not a law-abiding, country, and once the devices were declared to be illegal, the American people in the South found themselves in what Bruno Myrdal calls 'the American dilemma'—the contrast between what they say and what they do; and, the Americans being fundamentally good people, their conduct is more and more like what they say.

Secondly, the example again of what can be done by courage was done by President Truman, himself of Southern origin, Confederate origin. The question of segregating Negro troops in the army had been debated during and since the Civil War. It was said to be impossible to integrate white troops and black troops. Suddenly, Captain Truman of the Artillery—as he had been—as President decided the time had come, and he issued an order giving dates. 'From the following days, in the Navy, in the Army, and the Air Force'—there were different dates for various services; there were good reasons for that—'segregation will

stop, and people who don't like it can resign'. As far as I remember, one officer resigned. Segregation was abolished. It is not completely abolished yet, but it is completely abolished in certain services: in the Air Force, for example, Negro officers are commanding white troops with no difficulty. No dreadful consequences occurred, because President Truman simply said: 'I am Commander-in-Chief and people who don't like it can lump it and resign'.

### Negroes in the Universities

That shows what can be done in that way. In the same way, the Supreme Court by outlawing attempts to keep Negroes out of universities in the South caused no trouble at all. The decision, when rendered, actually was read in Oklahoma, but it applied to all of it which is not strictly a Southern state. The attempts, for example, to get the Negro student to sit separate from the white students and listen to lectures were struck down on the ground of 'that's not education; meeting people is education too'; and there have been no bad results. There has been one good result; the Southern States have proposed, and may carry out, a proposal to build what there never has been before—with one exception—a big medical school for Negro doctors in the South. This decision of the Supreme Court had not only intrinsically good results but the idea of building this big medical school would not have occurred to Southern legislatures if the Supreme Court had not acted as it did. There is now no state in the Union which has a Negro majority (there used to be two—South Carolina and Mississippi). Consequently there is no state in which, even if all the Negroes voted, they could impose on the South their own pattern of life. That is mainly due to emigration. Therefore, when the South builds this new medical school, it is in fact submitting to the law and not to political pressure.

But it would also be unrealistic to deny that political pressure has played a big part. When the Negro can vote he is cultivated by politicians who, a year or two before, may have been denouncing him in most violent terms; but once he gets the vote he becomes a voter. He gets better schools, better hospitals, better parks. The moment he becomes a voter he is cultivated, and that is why the Negroes are right in insisting the first thing they need is the vote, because they know when they get the vote all other things, nearly speaking, will be added unto them. I will give you two examples from the North; because it is a great American fault to blame the South. The city of Chicago is not a very well governed city, and the late Mayor Kelly was not—shall we say?—a model mayor. But he did forbid effectually segregation in Chicago schools. Every child in Chicago had to go to the nearest school whether it was coloured or white. Some people think he did this because of religious conversion. The remarkable, very liberal, Cardinal Mundelein gave Mayor Kelly a lecture on the state of his soul. But I think also the fact that there were 300,000 or 400,000 Negro votes in Chicago had something to do with this decision. Another example is in New York, where Negroes are more and more employed in department stores on all sorts of jobs they did not have before. That is partly due to public opinion; it is also due to law. There is a Fair Employment Practices Commission set up by Governor Dewey by statute, which can hear complaints. And I think the existence of the commission accounts for some of the new opportunities offered to American Negroes.

### Rise in the Level of Well-being

But the basic change in the American Negro situation is a general economic change; namely, the disappearance of unemployment and the great rise in the level of well-being all over the United States. Apart from the Puerto Ricans and the Mexicans, the Negroes are still at the bottom of the pile everywhere, but the bottom is much higher than it used to be. The Negro is now admitted to a great many jobs he never had before. Here I should like to give a tribute to the C.I.O. unions, which have from the start not only said but insisted that there should be no colour discrimination; and some important leaders in the big unions, such as National Automobile Workers, National Mineworkers, Steelworkers, are in fact Negroes. The C.I.O. has an extremely good record, quite as good as any English union and better than some, on that point. The A.F. of L. has not, but the A.F. of L. itself, under public opinion and pressure, is reforming. Formally speaking, now, no A.F. of L. union can discriminate. They do in fact, but it is something to have the formal admission of the equality principle.

Two bodies have played an important part here, two bodies whose record twenty-five or thirty years ago was not good and is now very



good—the Catholic Church and the Methodists. In Washington, D.C., the capital, for years it was impossible to see a play except at the Catholic University, because the Washington theatres would not admit, or rather segregated, Negro spectators, and the unions, the actors, and the stage hands, would not operate a theatre in which segregation was practised; the result was that the only theatre in Washington in which segregation was not practised and that could stay open was the theatre at the Catholic University. Cardinal Glenner of St. Louis was sued by some of his own flock for bad segregation in the Catholic privately-supported schools. He won his case, not only morally and legally but effectually; there is no segregation in the Catholic schools of that diocese.

In the same way the Methodists, whose record in the past was not much better, or any better, than that of the Catholics, have been extremely courageous. The United Methodist body will not now meet in any city in which coloured delegates, lay or clerical, are segregated. And any city which wants to have the annual Methodist conference meeting knows there must be no segregation or they will go away. That takes a great deal of courage: Methodists are strongest in the South, stronger than they are in the North. Again there has been the usual result—nothing happens: nobody walks out, people do not leave the restaurants, people do not leave the hotels; in fact, most of the things said about the effects of breaking down these barriers turned out to be totally fictitious.

I get the impression, moving round the United States, that people say: 'Well, I don't mind having a Negro family next door, but the neighbours do'. Then you discover that everybody says the same thing, and that in fact nobody really minds at all. A friend of mine in a university city defied the local convention, which the Supreme Court has now ruled is illegal, about sub-letting his house to a Negro. He did it deliberately, hoping—roughly speaking—that the neighbours would protest and would get him to court. But nobody protested. His great gesture turned out to be pointless because nobody minded.

The last thing I would like to say about the American Negro is: he is the real 100 per cent. American. The slave trade was abolished in 1807; there was a certain amount of bootlegging, but, roughly speaking, every American Negro can be sure that he is 100 per cent. American, though most American Negroes are in fact partly white. He is American in many other ways: his language is English; the attempts to find African culture traits have almost all broken down. It is not at all like the West Indies; the African Negro brought to the United States, taken away from his tribal situation, and put into a white society, was Americanised very rapidly. There is plenty of evidence of that; you could see it during the war in London, and I used to notice it when I saw the famous Snowdrop patrols, white and black, in Soho: from the back you could only see they were Americans because they walked in the same flat-footed American way. Many other attitudes of Americans are spontaneous, with the American Negro and the American of an old American stock. A friend of mine who was a welfare officer in Cleveland once told me that she found in court that American women of old white stock and American women of old Negro stock behaved in the same way; they had their rights. If they quarrelled with their husbands, they sued him; he could not take the furniture away. Whereas immigrant women—Poles and Slovaks and others—knew their place. The American woman, white or black, knew her place, which was on top.

That is one aspect of the American situation. The American Negro voice on the whole is more agreeable, as we all know, than the white American male voice; but it is a very American voice. An American Negro, I am told, has to be taught to sing in Italian with the same difficulty, roughly speaking, as the American white has to be taught.

What are the prospects? I began by pointing out that the Negroes

are still unequal. Even a man like Ralph Bunche, and a whole series of people I could mention, all have the handicap of being coloured. The difference is visible as one of them has pointed out. A great many thousands every year decide not to be Negroes any longer and become whites. So there is an unknown amount of Negro blood in the white population. But those who stay—and more and more are full of race pride now and do stay—have to face certain difficulties. They have been diminished; more and more equality is coming, more and more harmony is coming; there has been no lynching in the South for some years now, the Supreme Court of North Carolina has lately dismissed the absurd case of a girl who charged a Negro with raping her by looking at her. Yet the point remains, as Jefferson said; this is the great strain on the American profession, namely that all men are created equal. It must be noticed, as Bruno Myrdal pointed out, as many people

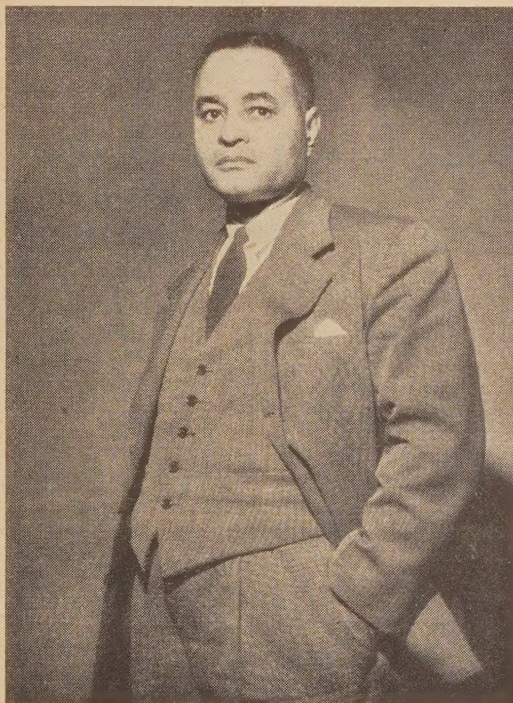
have pointed out, that a great deal of the progress of the American Negro is due to the fact that the Americans do believe in equality, they have a sense of guilt, a sense of shame, every time they discriminate by colour. That accounts for some of the violent explosions. People of good consciences on that matter, who believe the Negroes are the children of Ham, hewers of wood and drawers of water, are perfectly calm about it; the Americans are not.

They know also that outside the United States two things happen. One—which they resent rightly—is the fact that the American Negro is the most advanced Negro in the world, the best paid, the best educated, the healthiest, and so on, is ignored. But they also know the fact that there is discrimination inside the United States on coloured grounds (and there still is, above all in the city of Washington, the capital of the United States, dedicated to the pursuit of happiness, where there is a large monument to Lincoln, and another large monument to Thomas Jefferson with the Declaration of Independence carved on it)—they know that that is the great American scandal. They wish they could stop it; they are stopping it more and more, and nothing in my nearly thirty years' knowledge of America has given me more pleasure—I may say in some ways has surprised me more—than the degree to which many of the taboos which I first noticed in America,

even in New England, even in Boston, have simply vanished. When I once reminded a friend of mine of how he, a Southerner, used to feel, he denied firmly that he had ever felt that way at all. I did not argue the point. The fact that he had forgotten it was far more gratifying than the fact that I was right and he was wrong.—*Third Programme*

The latest volume of the Oxford Junior Encyclopedia is a biographical dictionary, *Great Lives* (O.U.P., 30s.). Those who know this excellent series—surely the best work of general reference now available for young people—will remember how large the territory assigned to earlier volumes has been, and how uncertain its frontiers: Mankind, Communications, The Universe, for example. But here the editor's task has been more straightforward; she has had to decide on the 550 men and women whose lives one would expect to find described in a reference book. The choice has been made in the light of certain sound principles: for example, most of the people in the book have 'in some way forwarded the progress of humanity', though, fortunately, the more notable villains have their place too. On the whole the choice is excellent. The book is splendidly illustrated and, save for an occasional touch of piety or unconscious humour, the biographies are well written. Of Charlotte Brontë it is curiously said that 'she secretly fell in love with M. Héger but did not care for his wife'.

The British National Conference on Social Work which met at Bedford College, London, last April, held a series of talks and discussions on the family as an evolving social institution in our time. The report of this meeting has been published under the title of *The Family* by the National Council of Social Service, price 3s. 6d.



Dr. Ralph Bunche, 'the most distinguished living American Negro . . . one of the great public servants of the world'



# The Listener

All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1. The articles in THE LISTENER consist mainly of the scripts (in whole or part) of broadcast talks. Original contributions are not invited, with the exception of poems and short stories up to 3,000 words, which should be accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. The reproductions of talks do not necessarily correspond verbatim with the broadcast scripts. Yearly subscription rates (including postage): inland and overseas, £1. Shorter periods, pro rata. Postage for single copies of this number: inland and overseas, 1½d. Subscriptions should be sent to the B.B.C. Publications Offices, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, or any newsagent.

## Local History

DR. HOSKINS put an attractive, even romantic, gloss on the study of local history in a recent broadcast talk which we publish this week. Lately, local history has become much more fashionable or at any rate more highly valued than it once was. Ever since Sir Lewis Namier published his book on *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* twenty-five years ago, professional historians have been emphasising the danger of looking at our history exclusively from the point of view of the central government or of thinking too much in terms of party politics. The patient researches of Professor J. E. Neale and his pupils, as well as of Sir Lewis Namier and his pupils, have thrown a new light on the social and political articulation of our country during the past 400 years of what is usually called 'modern history'. But they would be the first to acknowledge how greatly their work has been assisted by the selfless and often forgotten toil of amateur historians.

Of course local history *pur sang* has its defects, as even its most enthusiastic consumers would admit. There is always a temptation for its practitioners to make mistakes through ignorance or over-ingenuity, and just as national history is incomplete if regarded solely from the point of view of the seat of government, so local history can be worthless if studied in a vacuum. Moreover one must not always imagine that an intense study of individual trees is going to make it necessarily easier to see the wood. Dr. Hoskins, who himself was Reader in Local History at Leicester before he migrated to Oxford, probably knows as much about the subject as an academic historian; but it would be questionable policy if every university or university college were to start setting up chairs in local history. No doubt it is interesting to know that the landowners at Little Puddlecombe-under-the-Marsh were unfaithful to their wives or got drunk on Saturday nights, but it is probably more important to teach university students about the origins of our constitution and our political and social institutions as well as the greater world that lies outside these islands. Moreover, when all is said and done, local history is the easiest kind to study—one may not even have to leave one's own armchair—whereas successful research into foreign archives is one of the highest forms of erudition.

One noticed an omission from Dr. Hoskins' talk, no doubt owing to lack of time—or modesty (for he is an editor in the series): that was of the famous *Victorian County Histories*. These histories continue to be produced and revised, at present under the editorship of Mr. Ralph Pugh, who works under the aegis of the University of London Institute of Historical Research. They are an invaluable quarry for any student anxious to acquire background knowledge of territory not his own. While these histories are contributed to by many distinguished specialist historians, their compilation relies to a large extent on the help of the many little-known workers, to whom Dr. Hoskins referred in his talk, and to the output of the local record and antiquarian societies. Like all such co-operative works, these histories inevitably vary in quality, but the editor and his assistants are doing invaluable work in defining and raising the standards of local history. Undoubtedly in pursuing researches of the kind to which Dr. Hoskins referred in his broadcast co-ordination is a factor that must not be neglected or overlooked.

## P.S.A.?

OUR READERS may care to note that from next Sunday the Third Programme will open at three o'clock every Sunday afternoon during the winter months.

## What They Are Saying

### Foreign broadcasts on the Korean conference

THERE HAS BEEN some reaction, particularly in the east, to the speech on India's foreign policy delivered by Mr. Nehru this week, and to the whole question of the composition of the Korean political conference. The communist-controlled 'Russian Hour' of Vienna radio, reporting the speech, claimed that Mr. Nehru had identified the real disturbers of the world's peace with 'the warmongers in Washington'. It suggested also that the observations of the Indian Prime Minister were evidence that the patience of the neutrals was becoming exhausted. Moscow radio, quoting *Pravda*, said that Mr. Nehru's criticism of American policy reinforced its arguments that there was widespread support for the reopening of the discussions about the composition of the Korean political conference. In this connection, another Moscow radio commentator said:

India, as everyone knows, has contributed greatly to the efforts of the peace-loving countries to stop the war in Korea, and her activities have met with the approval of progressive circles everywhere.

On the other hand, the *Melbourne Herald* declared that Mr. Nehru's criticisms of western policy would cause misgivings to India's friends in the west. The paper went on to say:

India and the other Asian countries are entitled to a full share in the councils of those who are trying to build a peaceful world. While the task of ending the Korean war is primarily the responsibility of those nations concerned in the fighting, the final settlement in the east must be wider. But it will not ensure a lasting settlement if remnants of prejudice blind Mr. Nehru and other leaders in free Asia to the real issue.

Indian opinion on the conference and on the Korean problem, as broadcast by the Indian Information Service, was critical. Quoting the *Indian Express*, it said:

If, in addition, on the issue of Korean unification, the United States subscribes to any plan seeking extension of the Rhee regime to North Korea as well, not only North Korea and China but many others besides will oppose the move. Unless the Assembly avoids these pitfalls, it might be said even now that the political conference is doomed to failure. . . . It is time America retrieved the United Nations from the status of a satellite. Even if America wishes to demonstrate her firmness against communism, she will gain nothing by depending solely on her own interests and those of her allies, to the exclusion of the needs, desires, and convictions of the 'uncommitted' countries of Asia which contain over 700,000,000 of the world's population.

The Chinese radio also had some observations to make on the political conference. In the main they endorsed the terms of Chou En-lai's message to the United Nations, and went on to say:

It is reasonable for the political conference to take the form of a round-table conference because it is not the same as the armistice negotiations which were of a military character. Its task is to negotiate the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea and the peaceful settlement of the Korean question and after this to discuss other questions. The fulfilment of this task has everything to do with the interests of peace and security of all the peoples in the Far East and the rest of the world. There is absolutely no reason to exclude those nations who did not take part in the armistice negotiations, particularly the Soviet Union and the other Asian nations concerned.

The Soviet Union's new agricultural plan has aroused considerable interest on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Moscow radio devoted a great deal of comment to it, as well as to the alleged successes of 'socialist agriculture' in general. Quoting from *Pravda*, another commentator declared that:

The material conditions and possibilities for raising agriculture will not give the required effect by themselves without an improvement in the work of party organisations. In order to utilise these opportunities, party organisations must head the broad masses of collective farmers and workers, and must lead them in the struggle for a mighty upswing in agriculture.

In the United States, the *New York Herald Tribune* made this comment:

The new policy is a recognition of the force of individual initiative and of the losses the Soviet Union has incurred by slighting it. Perhaps, too, these concessions to the farmers may prove the thin edge of the wedge which will eventually split the iron mould of dogma into which Stalin forced Russian agriculture. In any case, it is clear that the process of change which set in with Stalin's death is still under way—and where it may lead no one can prophesy.



# Did You Hear That?

## BRADSHAW AND HIS TIME-TABLE

'GEORGE BRADSHAW', said CHARLES DIMONT in a Home Service talk, 'was born in Lancashire in 1801, the son of a humble couple who, previous to his birth, had worked at West Wycombe in the service of the Dashwood family. Their son went to school at Overton, in Lancashire, but unfortunately his father could not afford to continue his education after he was fourteen. Like so many eminent Victorians, George Bradshaw was to be a self-made man. He was apprenticed to a printer and engraver in Manchester, but before long he set up for himself in a similar line of business. In the meantime he had become a member of the Society of Friends, the Quakers. It was these religious beliefs which led him to want people to know each other better.

'He began in the late 1820s specialising in maps of canals and navigable rivers, what he called "inland navigation". It was an original idea because, as he pointed out in an appendix to them, no such general maps had hitherto been widely available. These waterway charts are beautifully engraved and precise in their detail. The few railways of the time were shown on these maps.

'It was therefore a natural step for Bradshaw to turn his attention from canals to the infant railways. It is difficult for us in these days, when we can travel faster than we can hear each other speak, to realise what isolated lives men and women lived 120 years ago. Then, a journey from one county to another was an adventure. In the 1830s Bradshaw saw the great possibilities in the new railways, and who can blame him for presuming that speedier travel would mean people getting to know each other better and therefore the establishment of a more peaceful human society? It was a belief held by many of the Victorians. The opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway convinced him that he had a part to play in railway development. This decided him to embark on the publication of the time-tables.

'Of course he did not invent or originate the idea of time-tables. In the coaching days the stage-coach proprietors had issued handbills of their arrivals and departures. The earliest railway companies followed suit with schedules of their own particular lines. But these were often obtainable only in the particular locality of their operation and a traveller coming from afar would find it difficult to plan his journey upon any reliable information. What Bradshaw did was to combine all the various time-tables into a single and authoritative volume. In the first *Railway Companion* of 1839, there was not a great deal of material to include—there were no more than eighty-two railway stations in the whole country—but he outstripped his rivals by always remembering that passengers were human individuals who needed much more than statistical tables to calm their apprehensions as they set out upon the great venture into the unknown of a railway journey.

'It was in his nature to want people to travel with ease and comfort, and to enjoy moving about and meeting their fellows. So he added maps, the distances between every station on the lines, advice about labelling luggage, information about dealing with porters—they were strictly forbidden to accept tips in those days—and the cost of taking one's own horse and carriage on special vans so that one could complete the journey at the other end. Nor did he leave the traveller bewildered and open to exploitation on arrival at his destination. The cab fares in all the principal towns were tabulated.

'Once he had firmly established the *Railway Guide*—the title was soon changed to this and remains so to this day—he started a correspondence column, encouraging passengers to write their queries and complaints and printing replies to them. So among other things Bradshaw was a pioneer in the idea of "Letters to the Editor" in popular style. The "Letters" were a regular feature of the *Guide* in the middle of the last century'.

## LECTURING TO THE TROOPS

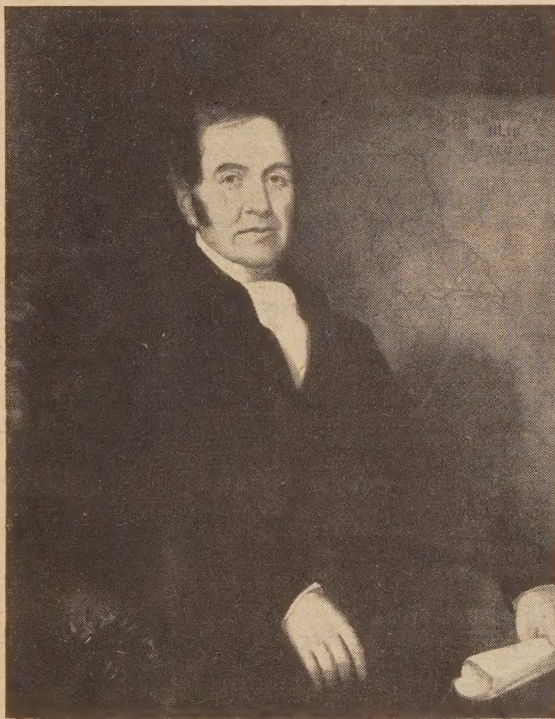
In a Third Programme talk PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE spoke of his experiences in lecturing on the theatre to British troops stationed in Africa. 'If there is an irreducible resistance to education in some quarters', he said, 'not confined to the army, let us observe—there is

also a considerable service love of sitting on the behind and being talked at: if it is too dull, one can go to sleep, "take a sizz"; if there is anything to interest, it may after all, in a desert of boredom, seem more interesting than it would at home. Still, the theatre was an uphill subject, except as where, strangely often, one found oneself among a nest of dramatic enthusiasts, fiercely arguing the toss about whether to perform for the battalion's benefit "Journey's End" or "Lady Precious Stream", both of which have disadvantages but also advantages from the point of view of props or lack of them. And they would expect you to arbitrate. Elsewhere you had to adapt your approach in the few seconds you had to sum up the audience and its I.Q., which of course varied—not to put too fine a point on it. Three hundred pioneers were likely to be less good on the Elizabethan dramatists than a similar audience of airmen—and even then . . .

'And as a special kind of audience there were bands—or at least part of bands: such bandsmen who could be spared from the deafening bugling and drum thumping which their comrades were carrying out under the windows of the hut where you were speaking. The argument (I fancy) goes like this: bandsmen are musicians, music is an art, therefore the properest victims for a lecture on an arts subject are bandsmen. For bands one could veer into the

history of the musical theatre, into the history of opera, which was a word which always touched off, I noticed, a very special interest. "Did they understand it?" I asked afterwards, with that fishing-for-compliments attitude which becomes, like over-confidence, a sort of professional disease with a lecturer. "Well, they liked the part about the Handelian castratoes", I was told. Human interest, of course. But it was always a relief to find that even the mildest of jokes would be taken up generously.

'An approach to the subject was best effected by way of the films which every man seemed to know from A to Z, and taken as swiftly as possible towards discussion of television and its possibilities in drama, which always stirred their interest. There were gaps, it is true, gulfs of boredom which one saw yawning ahead and had to jump; distractions, too—a sandstorm, or a battle of Arab camp followers in the background, thunder, hail, and the plagues of Egypt; but I generally found one still stood some chance of being listened to, provided one showed pretty quick that one was not going to preach, had no idea of improvement in mind, and was unlikely to bully, exhort, or provoke them to question asking (thus prolonging their martyrdom)—in short,



George Bradshaw, who died 100 years ago: a painting of 1841  
National Portrait Gallery



to stick ostensibly to the ages, weights, and love-lives of the stars, the technical problems of the cinema and its tricks, and, above all, any tales one could muster of theatrical disasters new or old. These were the special favourites: tales of burnt ballerinas, torn tights, wigs which slipped, and the night the scenery fell down.

'One miscalculated hopelessly sometimes; and there were the strangest fluctuations in the size of the audience and its enthusiasm, which was sometimes quite unpredictably enthusiastic, sometimes fidgety and bored, with glazed eyes and set jaws; or non-existent: when arriving in a cinema to hold 2,000 and finding it occupied only by two sparrows and the chaplain, one knew—not so much that one had suddenly slumped at the box-office, as that there was a boxing match on elsewhere'.

### RIDING IN THE GRAND NATIONAL

'Of all my riding experiences', said JOHN HISLOP in a Home Service talk, 'my rides in the "National" have been the most exciting and memorable, and I think every other steeplechase rider would say the same.

'Apart from the big fences, the huge number of runners, the speed at which it is run, and the fact that it is the blue riband of steeplechasing, there is an atmosphere about the "National" that no other race possesses. It is not easy to put it into words, but to me it suggests the tense excitement of war—an excitement which is not merely confined to those taking part, but which grips everyone who has even the faintest interest in the proceedings.

'I think that this aspect has a definite reaction on the rider; because you cannot help realising that, however obscure your horse, there are thousands of people to whom his fate in the race means a great deal; people who do not follow racing in the ordinary course of events, but who like to risk a shilling on their fancy in the "National". This means that if a rider is going to be effective, he must have the "big-match" temperament. That is to say, he must realise the importance of the occasion, without letting it overwhelm him.

'The first time you ride in the "National", everything seems strange. When you walk round the course beforehand—and every sensible rider does this—you realise how entirely different it is to every other. The fences are much bigger and more upright than those elsewhere, and instead of being made of birch, they are packed and covered with spruce, or gorse, or fir. So that they look rather like big banks; in fact, you will sometimes find an Irish horse mistaking them for a bank and either kicking back at them in the air, or trying to jump on and off them.

'Then, most of them have a big drop on the landing side, which is apt to upset calculations—both the horse's and yours. The drops to the first few fences are not too bad, but the one at Becher's Brook—that is the sixth fence—is a real precipice, and when you look at it from the landing side it is an awe-inspiring sight. It is a funny feeling jumping the first fence in the "National" if you have never ridden there before, because the drop on the landing side gives you a queer sensation of being suspended in the air for a fraction of a second

before landing. And if you are on a horse who has never run over the course before, he will quite often stumble when he lands, because he is not used to finding a drop on the far side. When you are over the first fence, you feel a sense of relief that, at least, you have made a start—the fact that there are twenty-nine more fences to jump fortunately does not seem to occur to one.

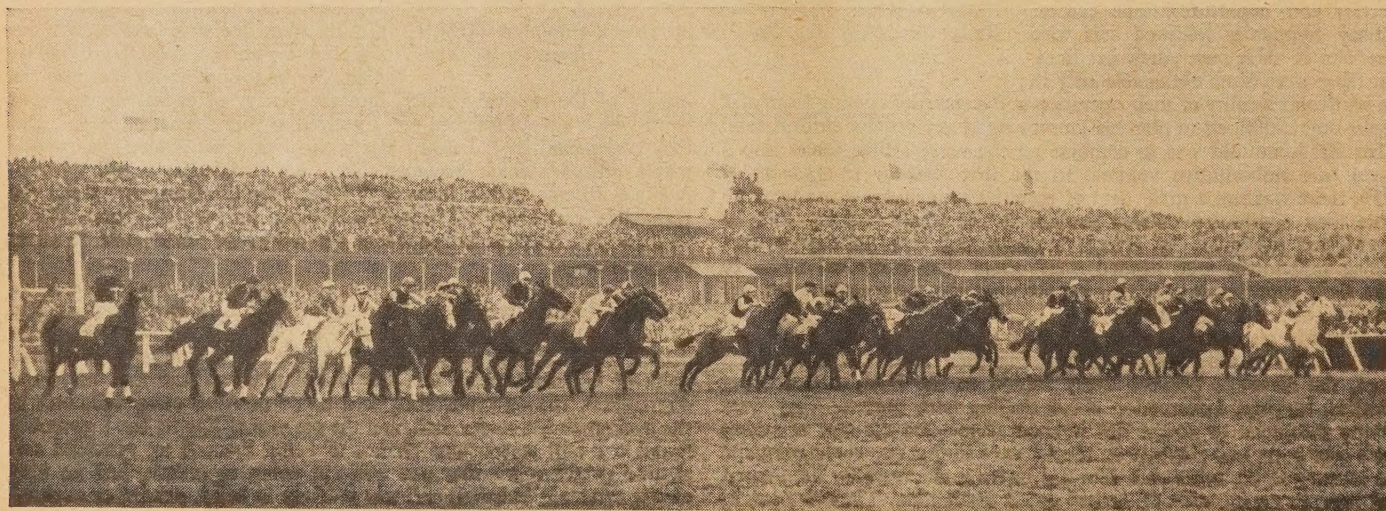
'On the whole, I think the best tactics in the "National" are to be in the first group all the way—provided, of course, you are riding a horse capable of being there. There is less chance of interference from other horses, and if your horse makes a mistake and drops back, you are not left with a hopeless amount of ground to make up. I have twice been in front for a good way in the "National", and there is no more exhilarating feeling. You get an absolutely clear run at each fence, you can go the shortest way, and you have the feeling of having the whole course to yourself, because you see and hear nothing of the horses behind you. All you are conscious of is the roar of the crowd as you come into each fence, and the rhythmic beat of your horse's hooves and hiss of his breath. And when you get away from the crowd, the silence is almost uncanny'.

### THE INTELLIGENT GOOSE

'For the life of me, I cannot remember now why I began to keep geese', said IAN FINLAY in a Home Service talk. 'It wasn't for profit. There isn't any—not the way I keep them. Partly, I think, it was because I had tired of pushing a heavy, rather unwilling old mower around the lawn and I was told the geese would do the whole job and maintain themselves in fodder and manure the lawn into the bargain. It seemed nearly as good as perpetual motion. Of course, it did not work out like that, but there were compensations. The best proof of this I can offer is the fact that I still keep geese.

'Why a goose should have come to be a synonym for silliness is something no breeder of geese will ever understand. The goose is the most intelligent creature in the farm-yard. Consider the hysterical squawking of the hen, or the borborygmus complacency of the cow, or even the sometimes fatuous frolicking of the dog itself. The goose is never hysterical. It is never complacent. In due season it is fat, portentously fat; but fatuous never. No other bird will return you look for look as the goose does. Their glances range from a sort of wary tolerance on the part of the younger matrons to a calculated devilry in the sky-blue, red-rimmed eye of the old gander as he gets in between you and the flowers of his harem.

'Some people give the palm for intelligence to the duck, stimulated no doubt by the invention of Mr. Disney; but I would maintain that nobody who has ever tried to put a lot of young ducks to bed on a cold, wet night will still call them intelligent at the end of the ordeal. But geese: why, I've gone out on a night of fog and in a quiet tone simply said "Bo-bo! Bo-bo!", like that, and out of the gloom within a minute the ghostly white procession has loomed, making straight for the door of the shed. No fuss: no protest. The only hesitation has amounted to nothing more than some courteous, after-you-please behaviour on the actual door-step'.



The start of this year's Grand National



# The Good Life—I. The Classical Way\*

By ALAN PRYCE-JONES

ALL through history people have been haunted by the thought that if they could only find it a full, satisfying, richly rewarded life was waiting for them just round the corner. That is what I call the good life: and of course it has nothing to do with goodness in the ordinary sense. Nor is it the same thing as the civilised life. Bacon, for example, and Beckford, and Proust were all, in their different ways, very civilised men, but I do not think anyone would put them up as examples of the good life; no, the good life, though it does not commit those who lead it to any one ethic, does involve a settled way of living, and it is the various alternatives which have been put up that I want to discuss.

They can be reduced to two main orders: the classical and the romantic. I know those are words which ought never to be used, because it is so hard to give them a precise meaning, but, in this case, the terms can be made fairly clear. The classic lays special weight on moderation, and the romantic on excess; the classic likes to feel himself part of an ordered society, the romantic likes the role of the lone horse; the classic, wherever possible, accepts; the romantic, wherever possible, complains.

## The Written Records

Both these views are normal to humanity, and probably have always been so; but our assessment of them is much coloured by two facts: that what we really know about man is wholly dependent on his own written records, and therefore covers a very brief span in his history; and, further, that, until lately, the classical party had control of almost all the records. Did some Roman poet feel and behave like Rimbaud? Did some ancient Egyptian Picasso sigh, and resign himself to the conventional decorations of Edfu? Were the cave-painters of the stone age expressing the controlled emotion of a Michelangelo towards their deities or were they simply a hunting tribe making an act the meaning of which is lost for ever? We have no idea at all. And when we turn to what ancient peoples actually said we find their opinions generally treated with such respect that posterity apparently accepts as a general truth any classical dictum put forward—accepts it as something which no reasonable person will deny.

I find this rather encouraging. For it is unlikely that the ancient world was inhabited solely by reasonable people. When we ourselves are tempted to think that the good life has gone for ever, let us remember that we are more articulate, more copious in speech, and much less inhibited than most of our ancestors. They will have found the good life as elusive as we do; but they made less fuss about it. And that they did so is due, no doubt, to the long reign of the classical ideal.

Englishmen used to be brought to this ideal largely through reading Horace: they came upon this kind of thing:

Remember, Dellius, when times are bad  
Keep a calm mind, and in good times no less  
Let it be tempered against all excess  
Of insolent rejoicing.

That is Lord Dunsany's translation, but he has left out one essential word, *moriture*—'Dellius, you-who-cannot-escape-death'. That was the fact which justified—justified, mark you, rather than required—a calm mind. Or, again:

No ivory nor gilded dome  
Doth flash and glitter in my home,  
No beams have from Hymettus come,  
Their weight on monoliths to lay,  
Cut in remotest Africa;  
I occupy no house in Rome  
Of Attalus, an unknown heir:  
No purple robes for me to wear . . .  
Only I have a certain share  
Of wit, and faith, and rich men pay  
Respects to me though I am poor.  
I ask the gods for nothing more.

The spirit behind such feelings was surprisingly continuous, century after century, and still more surprisingly it was greatly reinforced by

the advent of Christianity. Not for nothing were the writings of the ancient world assembled, commented on, and handed down by the scribes of the medieval church, not for nothing were mysterious affinities perceived between, say, Virgil and Christian thought, or the methods of Aristotle chosen as appropriate to the codification of a Christian philosophy. For the classical ideals of moderation, courage, and good sense lacked only one thing. They were precepts, launched, so to speak, in the void, backed by a committee of the gods, but true only to themselves in matters of belief. One knew that there were dark and hostile powers about; better, then, propitiate them; but since one could know very little else, it was better to be moderate also in the act of belief.

The issues of the days to be  
Wise Heaven hides in murky night,  
And smiles if man beyond his right  
Becomes solicitous to see.

That is Horace again—and the moral?

Make now the most of what is thine.

To this temperate habit of mind Christianity brought two new things: the assertion that there was one indivisible truth to be known about the world, and the conviction that, that being so, it was only necessary to learn it in order to experience the full plenitude of the classical ideal. *There* is the force of great men like Dante and Chaucer. The world, for a short time, really did seem one. A common language of the mind united all men with any pretensions to be called civilised, and between them they evolved the idea of a Christian society which seemed to promise all that the ancient world had postulated, but with a purpose and a meaning as well. Think of the passage about the stars in Addison's hymn:

What though in solemn silence all  
Move round the dark terrestrial ball;  
What though no real voice nor sound  
Amid their radiant orbs be found?  
In reason's ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice;  
For ever singing, as they shine,  
'The hand that made us is divine'.

'In reason's ear': not in the ear of the imagination, or of fancy. Down to the middle of the eighteenth century, it was generally taken for granted that reason could bestow a settled frame of mind upon the individual, could confirm him in his orthodoxy, and give a sanction to his pursuit of the classical virtues—since reason suggested that it was moderation rather than excess, good sense rather than fantasy, and courage rather than cunning which were likely to reap their reward in the sum of things.

## Unity of View

You will perceive how that attitude of mind influences any conception of the good life. For one thing, it must always keep the ideal in view, otherwise the system of desirable virtues collapses. It is no good telling people to be moderately foolish, or moderately un-courageous; they have to be inspired, not checked. And so, apart from an occasional joke, uttered in the spirit of paradox, you will discover an unexpected unity of view, as far as the good life is concerned, all down the ages, and all over the world. Do not get cumbered up with things, do not be too ambitious, do not see too many people, live in the country, meditate, enjoy calm pleasures such as sunlight and water, love wisely, make the most of the moment—such are the classical exhortations. And since, inevitably, they reach us by way of men of letters, their consequences on history and literature are easy to discern.

Most important of all, perhaps, the classically minded man never got out of touch with his contemporaries. Like Chaucer, he could be ambassador as well as writer of epics; like Berkeley, he could be bishop and scientist as well as philosopher. Emperors recorded their aphorisms, generals found time to write commentaries, and artifacts, feeling their gift to be of universal application, struck off a sonnet as finely as a statue. The classical ideal always fostered versatility, since it refused

\* The first of three talks



any overriding importance to one aspect of a gift. The true classic could control his faculties. If he wrote, it was because he had something precise to convey; the notion of 'pure' literature could have struck him only as an enormity. And what he had to convey might very well be something inapposite to a single individual. He might want to feel the army, the state, the Church, behind him. If so, the answer was in his own hands; for in an integrated society there is a place for everyone, and a chance of anyone, with sufficient gift, finding precisely his place.

And besides, in the classical world, there was always time. For since the principles which governed it were unchanging, and absolute, the worst that could happen was an unsuccessful experiment. One might get things wrong; someone else would get them right. For, as long as the principles were not transgressed, no error could be irrevocable.

The contention I hope to elaborate is that what I have called the classical approach to the good life is at the mercy of the romantic—a fact which has obtruded itself on western Europe particularly in the course of the past 150 years. But it seems strange, at first sight, that so obviously desirable a world as that of the classic should so regularly be overborne by aggressors. I remember visiting the ruins of a Roman villa in Sicily: a very late villa, lost among thick trees on a hillside. There, right into the dark ages, a rich Roman household lived among its

mosaics, its warm baths, its planted gardens. There it stayed until an enemy came and left the charred stones, the broken pavements which are being dug out at this very moment. How, one says to oneself, can that be? How, having once tasted the good life, can people, through their inaction, let it go? And one pictures that Sicilian country gentleman, surrounded by his bronzes and his marbles, and waiting with stoic and foolish calm for the coming of the barbarians.

The trouble with the good life, conceived in classical terms, is that it does not end like that at all. It becomes stodgy, conventional, repetitive. And when it collapses it does so because it has not the strength to go on. The Sicilian, bored to death with his 'genteel sufficiency', may go under, but his son changes sides: he joins the barbarians. And, similarly, each classic age loses the will to survive through the sheer monotony of its routine. What happens to literature is very like what happens to life. The flexed, economical Latin of Tacitus relaxes; it becomes first affected, then babbling, then empty. The elegance of Boileau comes to England: it revives our language through the great decades of the eighteenth century, only to end in minor writers like Erasmus Darwin. And sometimes it happens that at such a moment the romantic ideal is exactly what the world wants in its endless pursuit of the good life. Certainly, it is what happened round about the year 1800.—*Home Service*

## Annals of the Parish

By W. G. HOSKINS

IN the field of English history, few things have been more remarkable than the recent growth of interest in local history. Most counties today can muster a dozen competent local historians, sometimes considerably more. Probably no town in England, however small, however remote, lacks its devoted antiquary and chronicler. There are, indeed, times when one feels, going round England on foot and pausing to make enquiries about some house or earthwork, or church or wayside curiosity, that there can hardly be a parish in the whole country that does not possess somebody 'who knows all about it', to whom one is referred for the answer to all questions.

The study of local history is nothing new. It is, indeed, rather more than 400 years old in this country, for we may regard the appointment of John Leland as the King's Antiquary in 1533 as the beginning of it all. And we may regard William Lambard, a Kentish squire who published his *Perambulation of Kent* in 1576, as the first writer of a purely local history or 'survey', as the first generation or so of local historians preferred to call their works.

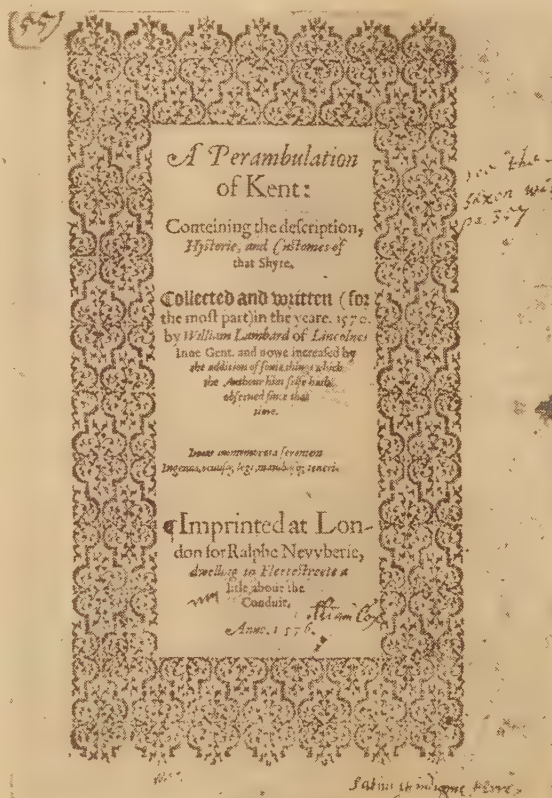
Nor were there only county histories. The towns were beginning to attract their own histories, or surveys. Most famous of all, of course, was Stow's *Survey of London*, published in 1598. Canterbury, Stamford, Newcastle, all got their first histories in the 1640s. From the Restoration onwards, as the immense store of the public records was made increasingly available by the labours of scholars, the flow of county and town histories steadily grew. By the end of the century the local historian had begun to turn his attention to the smallest unit of English society—the parish.

White Kennett's *Parochial Antiquities*, the first of the immense line of parish histories, was published at Oxford in 1695. But the parish historians were slow off

the mark: it was almost 100 years before another parish history appeared in print, as far as I can discover. There is no doubt that such histories were being compiled here and there all through the eighteenth century. But their authors were content—like so many of the county historians—to lend the manuscript to their friends, and to extend their knowledge in evening talk, exactly as so many devoted parish historians today.

Some of us, of course, itch to get our parish histories into print; but a far larger number are content to go on collecting notes year after year, fitting new pieces into the jigsaw of parish history and topography until we cannot walk down a lane or across a field without being reminded of some past event or person. So that for us local history is a perpetually unfinished feast, and we would not have it otherwise. And sometimes our histories are so scandalous—and I think these are perhaps nearer to the truth of history than those stuffed with official documents—that we dare not print them if we would. I doubt whether the nineteenth-century history of any English town—especially of an industrial town—can be faithfully recorded without a considerable element of personal scandal and risk of libel.

There is a most entertaining parish history, compiled by one Richard Gough about the Shropshire parish of Middle in the years 1700 and 1701, and not published until 1834. In that year a few copies of the work were privately printed by Sir Thomas Phillipps under the appropriate title of *Human Nature Displayed in the History of Middle*. Gough was a small squire in the parish, and he devoted the greater part of his book to an account of the various families who resided in the parish. He starts by giving us a plan of the seating in the church, and then, taking each pew in turn, gives a genealogical account of its occupants, past and present:



Title-page of William Lambard's *A Perambulation of Kent* (1576), possibly the first local history to be written



not a dull genealogy based on the official records, but one based on personal knowledge and anecdote, so that all these people come alive and we really feel that we are listening to a shrewd and scandal-loving old man letting himself go in the privacy of his own study. Richard Gough was getting on for seventy when he wrote all this down; he had known all the family skeletons for a couple of generations, and he called a spade a spade.

Here is one of his milder comments, about one Thomas Hayward:

He was a handsome gentleman, a good country scholar and a pretty clerk... He married with Alice, the daughter of Mr. Wihen, High Schoolmaster, in Shrewsbury. He had a good fortune with her in money. She was a comely woman, but highly bred and unfit for a country life, besides she was shrewd with tongue, so that they lived unquietly and uncomfortably, and their estate consumed insensibly. He had little quietness at home which caused him to frequent public houses for his natural sustenance, and there meeting with company and being generally well beloved he stayed often too long. His intimate friend was Mr. Hodgkins of Webscott, and indeed there seemed to be a natural sympathy between them, for they were both of them very just honest persons and well beloved—but their deportment when they were in drink was very different, for Mr. Hodgkins could go but not speak, and Mr. Hayward could speak as well and seemed to be more acute and witty in his drink than at other times, but could not go.

There is hardly a page of his book without such character sketches as this: it is indeed human nature displayed in the parish of Middle, as Sir Thomas Philipps said. But the economic and social historian can get a great deal of good history out of these scandals. One is continually brought up against the fact, in this book and others like it, that unfortunate marriages and excessive drinking—not always cause and effect—were often responsible for the dissipation of small freehold estates, not to mention an undue fondness for the other sex. These human failings lie behind the history of a good deal of the parish of Middle, and I suspect behind a good deal of the social history of England. It is only in rare and candid books like this that one sees what widespread and potent forces they were.

By the opening of the nineteenth century the flood of histories of counties, towns, and parishes was in full torrent. Nearly all were being written by squires and parsons; in the towns a few newspaper proprietors were busy as well. Some of the greatest of the folio histories of the English counties came out during the first half of the century; and simultaneously there was a new development—the special contribution of the nineteenth century in the field of English local history—and that was the foundation of societies all over the country devoted to the study of a single county, or occasionally, as in the case of the Surtees Society, of a whole region.

Reading in their 'Proceedings' or 'Transactions'—especially in the volumes before 1914—one gets the feeling of an England drenched in summer sunshine, of dusty white roads continually traversed by brakes full of antiquaries, making for each other's ruins on gigantic excursions half across the country, of bugles and whistles summoning ravenous antiquaries to lunch or tea in countless market-towns; and then of long winter evenings in their home towns devoted to their own territory and its inexhaustible history—those lantern lectures with sepia slides, and Colonel X exhibiting coins found on his estate.

The great contribution of these societies to the study of local history



Chelmsford in 1591: from the Essex Record Office's Catalogue of Maps

was that they widened its appeal by attracting numbers of educated people who had not the leisure or the money for the pursuit of local history on the grand scale but who still wished to make some modest contribution of their own; and for them the winter meetings were a stimulus and the annual volume of 'Transactions' or 'Proceedings' a way of getting into print on a scale commensurate with their interests and their incomes. The century wore on; the costs of printing rose, the scope of local history enlarged as the public records became better known; and the County History on the grand scale disappeared. The annual volumes of the local societies took their place.

If the contribution of the nineteenth century was the foundation of antiquarian and archaeological societies all over England, that of the twentieth century has been just as remarkable and fruitful in the foundation of local record offices. For the local societies still tended to be somewhat exclusive: they brought in the educated middle class, but no more. The times of their meetings kept away many who might have been interested but who had to earn a living. A society to which I belong—founded in 1855—until recently always met on Monday

afternoons at three, presumably a time laid down in 1855 to suit the clergy coming into town from the deep country, and the established Victorian business man who could safely leave his mill or factory after a late lunch and come to hear a little prehistory. But the change in the economic climate has altered all that. We all belong to the working class nowadays, and must wait until the evening for our lectures and meetings. The societies are all the better for this widening of their portals, not least because they now attract a sprinkling of schoolboys and schoolgirls at their meetings, and a younger generation is being infected with all the antiquarian delights. There are fewer white beards at the meetings, and more youthful faces, and this is all to the good. Though one rather misses the cantankerous old men.

Apart from the City of London, which had a record office before 1900, the growth of local record offices has been entirely a development of the past thirty years, the city of Bristol and the county of



The skeleton of an ox being examined by one of the schoolchildren who, during their holidays, have been helping members of the Brighton Archaeological Society to excavate a Bronze Age settlement on Itford Hill



Bedford being the two first in the field, in 1924. Now there are almost sixty such offices in England and Wales: few counties or large boroughs are without one.

The local record offices have flung the doors wide open to the amateur historian, to whom the Public Record Office in London was quite inaccessible, a mere name. All sorts and conditions and ages of students can be found working in the best of them, after their day's work or on their half-day. But this is not the only contribution of these offices: some of them have published guides to their archive collections, some have begun to publish the records themselves. Mostly these are the records of Quarter Sessions, the most important (though not, to my mind, the most interesting) of the county records; but the Essex Record Office has done far more than this. It has given us in recent years not only a detailed guide to the official and other records in its custody, but a fine catalogue of Essex maps, a volume of farmhouse and cottage inventories of fascinating interest to the social historian, a guide to all the parish records in the county, and much else. Now it has produced something of a different kind—two volumes of English history illustrated entirely from Essex sources and covering the period between 1550 and 1900.

There are two ways of regarding local history—what we may call pure and applied, the pure being studied solely for its own sake, out of a loving regard for all the facts, however trivial, about the past of a particular place; and the applied mainly concerned with the light that local history can throw upon our understanding of national history in some of its obscurer aspects.

Too much of our history is written from the standpoint of the central government in London, and this is not always the only—or indeed the truest—viewpoint. It is salutary to see how things looked from the

circumference in times of great pith and moment; and this is what the two Essex volumes deliberately set out to do for their own corner of provincial England, using every kind of material they can lay hands on. So the very first record that is quoted, to illustrate the havoc wrought in the churches by Protestant extremists as early as 1550, is the churchwardens' account for Great Hallingbury, and the last is an extract from a local newspaper for 1891 in which a Colchester trade unionist is arguing that Labour should be represented in Parliament. Between these two dates and this wide range of human activity, there are few aspects of English history that are not illuminated in the records of this single English county. Volumes such as this have, to my mind, two great merits: they show us how things looked at the receiving end of government, and they give us that minute detail which really brings home to us vividly that the Reformation, or the Civil War, or the Industrial Revolution really happened to ordinary people like ourselves, that they grumbled about things just as we do.

In history, as in so much else—as we know to our cost nowadays—the consumer's end is usually ignored. It is all very well to lay down great policies in Westminster and London, and to write history from the producer's angle: but let us hear more about the receiving end of the process, which is after all, one would have thought, the real test of good or bad government; and in the matter of history only local history—as portrayed in these Essex records, for example—can tell us this. Here we have the consumer's view of history, such as this laconic comment in Josselin's Diary under September 3, 1658: 'Cromwell died, people not much minding it'. One suspects that there are many events of which the national historians make much, on which we should find a similar popular verdict.

—Third Programme

## Three Poems on Greek Themes

### Kalamis and Sosandra

Above the lake the swallows dive  
And fishes mock their flight;  
Who is the goddess gave you birth  
On some past starlit night?  
Who cut the secret knot of life  
And left a hollow where  
The lion with the wounded paw  
Impressed a seal of air  
Invisible yet viable  
The seed of my despair  
That soon will sprout and climb and cling  
Your ivy in my silver hair.

I would not wish another thing  
But that you wear no new disguise  
You have the wisdom of the young  
And I the false youth of the wise  
You hold a stylus in your hand  
You have placed me on a pedestal  
You have carved the torso and the head  
Your gaze is on the genital.  
*A warm breeze blows across the lake  
It is the season of the grape  
The god, the lion and the man  
They have a single shape.*

### Sappho and Atthis

We lay upon the Chian isle  
The dark hours through  
And heard the impatient waters beat  
Upon the broken shore

The storm that in its brutal grasp  
A day ago  
Clutch'd and compress'd our stricken hearts  
Has left no sign of wrath.

I watched the light seep through the clouds  
And sun establish day:  
The hills across the bay drink in  
The liquid edge of night.

The fishers come in from the sea  
And now unfold their nets:  
I wish that their hands could unravel  
Our intricate mesh.

### Death of a Mercenary in the Service of Alexander

He had made no history: no song  
but seven times he reiterated  
as over fragrant bread  
the one word *Om*.

There was a golden avalanche in the air  
of honeysuckle and crumbling stone  
the lizards ran invisibly  
over a wall that was gone.

The startled goats left footprints  
pointed like the olive leaves  
the dry leaves rustled  
over his broken graves.

He was not old  
but grey webs of anguish  
hung in an immense visage  
now growing cold.

HERBERT READ



# Social Aspects of Southern African Music

By HUGH TRACEY

THE study of music in southern Africa (Bantu Africa, as it is sometimes called) is primarily the understanding of a social process rather than the analysis of strange rhythms and melodies. Its real importance lies more in its social function—what it does for the people—than in its physical structure—what it is in itself. The oral music of Africa is subject to constant and gradual change which is often mistaken for decay. Every piece of pre-literate music has to work for its living. Once its keen edge is blunted and a song is no longer effective in achieving its purpose, whether it be the direction of thought into spiritual channels or of feet into dance routines, it is abandoned by the rising generation. To us, who are foreign to the inspiration which for centuries has produced this particular branch of music, there may or may not be much aesthetic merit in it. We are observers—observers, admittedly, with a certain sense of apprehension as to what is happening to African society under the impact of our western culture. And because African music does not impinge upon our daily lives and routines, we white people are perhaps inclined to ignore its implications in the lives and minds of the Africans.

## The Modern Scene

How, then, does music enter the modern scene, and in what way can it affect the greater issues in Africa today? A study of what it has meant to Africans in the past may perhaps give us the key to its proper function in the future. Africans have always used music as a means of social integration. People who sang the same songs, absorbed the same teaching which these songs contained (and most tribal songs contained some kind of a moral), people who spoke the same language and responded to the same loyalties, were much more likely to defend themselves successfully against neighbouring tribes than those who employed no such means of building up loyalty to chief and country.

When we arrived on the scene during the last century, southern Africa, that is Africa south of the Equator, contained well over 100 separate groups of peoples, each of which largely despised, hated, and would gladly have exterminated the others if they had had the chance. The Zulu were happily dominating and destroying the other Nguni around them, about the same time as Napoleon was dominating the rest of Europe, and it took us about fifty years to stop them. Southern Africa was sharply divided into scores of watertight compartments, fiercely defended by the local inhabitants. They had achieved some degree of hostile stability by the time we had arrived, but only at the cost of continual vigilance; and the proper social use of music was one of those means of producing solidarity and patriotism which spelt survival in a merciless world.

The arrival of immensely strong European peoples, who insisted by force of arms that there should be no more inter-tribal fighting, opened up those watertight compartments of tribal isolation and let in the flood of commerce and industry, education, and universal religions. This made tribal patriotic songs seem increasingly senseless, except to old soldiers who enjoyed singing the old-time songs of their age groups and regiments. The white man's spiritualities undermined those of their own familiars which, until then, had proved effective against other tribes but were no match against the wider forces which were impinging upon the whole of their known world. Our European manufactures of the simple necessities of life, for example, proved to be so much better and more easily obtained than those the local craftsmen could turn out, in pots and pans, clothing and blankets, knives and weapons, that their crafts and the magical songs which went with them were considered old-fashioned, or no longer provided a livelihood. The women, like women everywhere, brought pressure to bear on the men to bestir themselves and go off to work for money and buy them better clothes. A song I recently recorded in Congo, supposed to have been sung by a young woman, ran like this:

If you don't stop wearing those tatty old trousers and buy yourself a decent pair,  
I'll leave you, and go and live with that nice rich man who has warm woolly blankets.

Here is another, which was sung by a young woman of Mozambique:

I am distressed—my man is away in the mines, and he sends me nothing, not even that cheap black cloth,  
To make me a dress.

Everything in the old order began to crumble, and the music which had helped to produce such good results in the past appeared of little consequence to the new generations who now looked outside their tribe, to the foreigners, to their teachers, for protection, for charity, and the obvious blessings of science, not to mention the magic of singing the white man's music, which must surely help one to become civilised. The tribe no longer needed local patriotism in the old fighting sense and consequently they discarded their old raiding songs. The new religion, it appeared, no longer preoccupied itself exclusively with the continuity of their own people, the adoration of their forebears, and the ethical guidance of well-disposed spirits with which to guard against the eternal enmity of those across the river or behind that range of hills. The religious music and the carvings which had been a constant oral and visual reminder of these tribal realities seemed to lose their grip. They no longer mattered, it appeared.

What has been the result? Within a single century of European contact the whole *raison d'être* of the arts in tribal Africa has undergone a radical change. We attacked their traditional loyalties for the sake of the wider ones. We discouraged fighting songs because they might lead them into fighting us or into fighting each other again. We outlawed the music which in any remote way was associated with the old life and old religions for much the same reason—we were frightened of it. We tolerated those work songs and dances, party songs and ditties, which we thought were amiable and harmless, and, of course, those about which we knew nothing at all.

I rather think we imagined we could entirely eradicate the music of centuries by careful teaching; that we could sell them new music like groceries across the counter. We had forgotten the primary quality of the arts: that they are only effective in so far as they maintain and reflect a continuity from the past and are a part of a natural evolution in the present, keeping pace with the general level of public thought and emotions from day to day. We over-estimated the strength of our musical influence upon them, with the result that much of our music teaching has gone sadly awry. In fact, the most active outside influence today upon the music of southern Africa is not ours, but that of their cousins in the Americas, whose Africanness they unconsciously recognise. They have in this way achieved a style (a rather dreary style) which is agreeable to younger people and which satisfies their longing for social prestige. For jazz, which they call *ijairi*, has come to them through the films and from gramophone records, both of which they consider to be highly sophisticated means of achieving social success.

## Three Stages

As a result, we have now three stages of African music side by side, all over the continent, corresponding largely with 'country', 'institutional', and 'town' life. First, there is the traditional style of music, which still accompanies all the older forms of social pleasure, dancing, work songs, trance, and the ceremonial music which is attached to the more stable chieftainships (this still constitutes by far the most important and the greatest bulk of their music); secondly, the hotch-potch of foreign-taught music, which ranges from French folk songs to cowboy yodels, jazz, and the simpler kinds of hymns; and, thirdly, the popular town music which is beginning to find its feet and create an individual style of its own. It seems clear that the African musicians who matter to their own communities today are those with strong beliefs in the importance of their own genius and the ability to throw off the unnecessary trammels of foreign music which threatened to swamp them entirely. Naturally European influence will be reflected in their work to a lesser or greater degree, but, I imagine, it is likely to remain an influence in the structure rather than become the foundation of their music in future.



What has actually happened is that the older forms of music, constantly renewed, are continuing to do yeoman service to those remote and country communities whose means of livelihood have changed little; to the peasant farmers, for example, and to the pastoralists like the Masai who wander about the plains with their cattle. It is amongst these country people that you still find the most accomplished musicians. They play their traditional home-made instruments with all the skill of master craftsmen, and with a technique which is so genuine it is a positive delight to watch. The younger generations, who have been weaned away from their own, are preoccupied with easy imitations of European music, and around Mombasa and Dar-es-Salaam with Indian and Arab music as well. I am told there are more records of Indian music sold to impressionable Africans in Mombasa than of all other kinds put together. This, they say, is on account of the large number of Indian films they see there. As you would expect, imitation, however sincerely flattering, is apt to become rather tedious and serves the ends of social climbers rather than the good of the community. It is an acknowledged fact that our institutions have so far failed, almost without exception, to turn out any outstanding African composers of originality and real merit who in any way could stand comparison with the master musicians of the villages.

### New Kind of Negro Music

Then we have the rapidly increasing urban communities in the great industrial areas, such as those around the gold or copper mines of Johannesburg, Congo, or the Rhodesias, who are drawn from many different tribes, and who are learning to use one or other of the more common European or African languages as their *lingua franca* (English, French, Portuguese, Swahili, Zulu, and so on). The towns attract a few country musicians, but there they are overshadowed by the part-time music makers who get together and form jazz bands, and by the popular entertainers who sing the bawdy songs of the back streets. These two, the dance bands and the popular singers, are together beginning to create a new kind of Negro music which may one day enjoy as great a popularity as the early jazz bands of New Orleans.

So much for the music. But what do we find them singing about and how is it socially important? The more we study the words of African songs, the more we realise the strong social pressures they bring to bear upon the members of the communities who sing them. You will find, for example, songs which contain directly or indirectly all the moral teaching which a child should know to become a good, polite member of society: songs which tell of the awful consequences to those shocking children who did not obey their parents; at a later stage, songs which lampoon those young people who have failed to observe the accepted decencies of sexual morality or who have been selfish with food, cheated their friends, or avoided their proper duties to the community. They will be sung about by name. An ambitious man who wants to usurp power will be exposed, a neglectful chief reminded of his duties to the people, and a jabbering old busybody told to mind her own business. No one in tribal life is exempted from the correction of song.

Where the continuity of such songs is broken, as in the modern towns, the criminal element quickly loses its fear of the sting of the public tongue and we find the 'spiv' gangs of our larger cities becoming a law unto themselves. Johannesburg and Nairobi have been particularly cursed with these young thugs. Where lawlessness and licence have been at their worst we are now finding choirs of honest men and women attempting to build up public opinion against the *tsotsi* or 'spiv' element, warning their young people against the moral and physical dangers of bad company and the tragic end of undisciplined children. They have discovered that you can often sing in poetry what you could not preach to a man's face in prose. With the great majority of Africans still unable to read or write, the spoken or sung word is still far more effective than the printed page in creating public opinion, public opinion of a kind which the so-called 'right thinking' members of the community consider to be important, morally, politically, or in any other direction. I once heard a Xhosa say excitedly: 'We don't have a vote but that does not matter. But if they tried to stop us singing there would be a rebellion tomorrow'.

Song, of course, can also be put to anti-social or inconvenient ends, from our point of view. We have had a recent example in the songs and hymns which the Kikuyu have been singing to engender loyalties to their political leader, Jomo Kenyatta. They hoped in this way to reawaken tribalism which was intended to throw out their best and almost their only friends, the white people, and leave the field open

once again for inter-tribal conquests on the old African pattern. It has been said (I do not know how truly) that the Mau Mau were openly spreading instructions to their followers by sending men to sing songs in the streets which no one else could understand. This sounds strange here but would be quite natural in Africa, where anyone sings and plays an instrument as he walks along the street. The Kikuyu have taught us two important lessons: that it is wise to learn to speak the tribal language of the people around you, and still wiser to understand what they are singing.

I think it is fair to assume that if you want an accurate, if small, reflection of what is going on in any African community you should listen to what they are singing about. You would have your finger, like a doctor, on the pulse of society. If there has been a tragedy in the village, all the people will be singing about it and how it came about, and that will ease the burden of personal distress by sharing it with everyone else. If they hate the newly appointed chief, there, in their songs, you will find a dozen good reasons why he should be thrown out. If, on the other hand, they approve of him, there will be plenty of praise songs for you to hear. Had the common people really disliked the idea of Federation (which I very much doubt), they would have mentioned it in hundreds of songs. If disease or famine has overtaken them the details will be there, loud and clear. Their respect for the decencies, their particular forms of indulgence, their ideal loves and their pet aversions may all be jumbled up in a single song, but they will teach an outsider more about the tribe in a single day than he will learn in a month of direct observation; and what he learns will be authentic because it was meant only for local consumption.

The Ganda, for example, show a strange preoccupation with the subject of death. It continually crops up in all kinds of songs. They are also one of the few Bantu tribes who reflect a strong 'master and servant' relationship. I recorded a song recently warning a man to be a good and faithful servant once he was entrusted with duties by his master, and to respect the servants of another man even though they were smaller than himself because they represented the dignity of their master. A Soga song from Jinja, near the source of the Nile, contained this piece of wisdom:

If your wife is rude to you, she loves another.

If your servant is rude to you, he wants to leave you.

The Luo musicians over the border in Kenya give away the secret that they admire the successful business man beyond all others, and especially one who is generous with his money and throws large parties at which there is plenty of 'fooding, drinking, and dancing', as one man explained. At the other end of the continent, the Chopi from Portuguese East Africa reveal their preoccupation with intrigue for appointment to positions of authority, and, incidentally, the frequency with which local African clerks help themselves to public moneys in their charge. Very little is not revealed consciously or unconsciously in song, in the towns as well as in the country. I know of one town where the great majority of songs refer to venereal disease and the local medical officer confirmed the impression that they had good cause to be worried by the situation.

### A Factor in Good Government

There, then, is a glimpse of social music in action, easing the tensions, comforting the bereaved, consolidating public opinion, and generally operating on the side of law and order. It is a factor in good government, helping to integrate society; in education, bringing out their character and self-reliance; and nowadays in radio programmes also, as the proper starting point for all local entertainment. African social music cannot be overlooked and must contribute materially to the sense of well-being—a something which helps to make life worth while in the face of all those extraordinary things that the African climate, politics, famines, and floods can do to you.

It is the one side of African life which has perhaps been the most misunderstood and in fact ignored. Yet, in so many ways, it is bound up with the genuine integrity of their race, at once the builder and the reflection of true character. In comparison with the real thing it is so worthless for them to try to learn and repeat foreign music, which, however accomplished, is only an exercise in imitation of outsiders, whatever satisfactions they may get out of it. To those of us who have begun to study it, the social music of southern Africa reveals a set of the most human, complex, puzzled, and, indeed, often lovable and loyal characters, who one day, we hope, will forget about imitating others and have the courage of their own composers.—*Third Programme*



Six Houses

# Lydiard Tregoz, Wiltshire

By SIR HUGH CASSON

**I** FIRST heard the name of Lydiard Tregoz twenty-one years ago. It was my friend Robert Byron who told me of it, though—to be truthful—it was not of the house but of the nearby church that he spoke with such enthusiasm. Indeed, so enthusiastic was he that he made me promise to visit it forthwith. I did not forget the name Lydiard Tregoz—how could so magical a name once heard ever be forgotten?—but it was in fact ten years later, while on my way from one to another of those aerodromes with which war-time Swindon was ringed, that I saw the name on a signpost and turned off to keep my promise.

I left the car at the gate and walked up the long, deserted drive. The house and park were silent, watchful. I peered through the glass of the front door. The beady eye of a stuffed puffin in a glass case stared defiantly back at me. Abashed, I retreated to try my luck with the church. It was locked, but by clambering up I could see into its tiny but fabulous interior. The chancel was packed, literally jam-packed to the roof, with splendid seventeenth-century monuments—gilded and carved and painted and inscribed—looking in the dimness as heraldic and highly coloured as an upset pack of playing-cards—and in a way, almost as sinister. For several minutes I watched. Above my head droned the Hudsons and the Whitleys, the Wellingtons and Oxfords and Ansons—honoured names ten years ago, but now I suppose as obsolete as the swords and breastplates which in effigy lay in the church, over the tombs of those who had worn them in battle. When at last I turned to leave I resolved to come back again as soon as I possibly could.

But needless to say it was again ten years—only a few weeks ago—before once more I turned off the Bath Road by the signpost which reads 'To Lydiard Park'. As I drove down the gently winding road I remembered what I had since learned of the history of the house. Until recently, it had remained in the unbroken ownership of one family—the St. Johns—since the Norman Conquest. It was thus as old as, older perhaps than, some of the fields and hedges which stretched

away on either side of us to the distant downs. I am not going to try to unravel for you its long and complicated history, for this is as confused, and really almost as irrelevant, as the plot of an opera—a hopeless tangle of nephews and half-brothers, of remarriages and



Monument to Nicolas and Elizabeth St. John, erected in 1592 in the church at Lydiard Tregoz

*Reece Winstone*



Lydiard Tregoz: the south front

*'Country Life'*

disinheritances, of Jacobite alliances and exiles abroad, of titles lapsing and passing as swiftly as shuttles across the fabric of the centuries. But here are a few facts to get down and out of the way before we get there.

The house as it stands today was built with his wife's money by the second Viscount St. John between the years 1743 and 1749. The architect, if any, is unknown and the rebuilding was never finished—perhaps, since the owner was notoriously stingy, because the money ran out. The original designs were obviously much altered as the work proceeded. It has been twice damaged by fire and has had its share since of cobbling and patching. It is, in other words, a typical English country house, and like many others of its kind it was about to founder in the familiar seas of death duties and decay when in 1943 the Corporation of Swindon—all credit to them—came to the rescue and bought it. It is now being carefully and expertly repaired; but this is a slow job and it will be some time before the house is completely restored to health.

At this point in my reflections the road swooped left across a pocket-sized common, plunged into a green



tunnel of an avenue, and as suddenly emerged into a small clearing, and there it was—or rather there they were—for church and house are set so close here as to form one group of buildings. On the left was St. Mary's, its churchyard set out as for some curious picnic, with flat-topped table tombstones. Behind, and almost touching it, stood the house—from this side an extraordinary assembly of brick and stone and plaster and projections and rakishly adjusted roofs, odd windows and chimneys of every size and date, looking as picturesque and untidy as the backs of houses you sometimes see from a railway train.

This unprepossessing view is all the casual visitor might ever see of Lydiard Tregoz. But he must not despair. If he penetrates, as I did, the old garden wall, past the coachhouse and across the cobbled yard, and finally through a thin screen of giant beeches, he will see something very different: a pair of formal and beautifully proportioned stone facades, two storeys high, and crowned with a balustrade which terminates at the corners in miniature pavilions, all set four-square to the park, so as to conceal within the angle of their joining the medieval jumble that lies behind. A central pediment contains the St. John arms, the only touch of richness upon an otherwise sedate facade. The colouring of the stone is exquisite—a white-flecked lilac grey with a warm golden underglow, as though the stones had managed to soak up and store the sunshine of many centuries. Even on a wet February evening this house would look friendly and beautiful. As it happened, I was lucky in my weather. It was the sort of day the weather people call 'bright periods'. The air was diamond bright, shadows fell on turf and stone as crisply as if they had been painted there. It was a day designed for architecture, and there before me was architecture designed for such a day: a gentle, Georgian house, sunning itself as serenely as an old grey cat, accepting admiration but too old and confident to demand it. The white-barred windows stared at me with bland indifference—five of them, I was to discover later, are in fact false; the only movement perceptible to the eye was an occasional leisurely twitch from the wind-vanes on the corner turrets.

Such self-possession was a challenge to entry. I approached the main entrance, marked by a pillared porch, its mouldings still as razor-sharp as the day they were cut. Within was a cool, silent emptiness, an interior clean, pearly-coloured, and well-formed as some gigantic sea-shell. Faithfully beneath each window rested its sunny image upon the floor, one beyond the other from room to room, to room again. First the entrance hall, nearly two storeys high, cubical in proportion: the floor stone-paved, the walls rich in plasterwork, the ceiling vaulted and decorated. To the left and right stretch the main reception rooms, planned *en suite*. First the library, where busts of philosophers look down their marble noses from the tops of carved and ornamented book-cases; the dining-room with its columned screen and on its walls the ghostly shadow stains of long-vanished pictures, which from their shape must surely have been family portraits and romantic Italian landscapes; the drawing-room, with its faded scarlet-damask-papered walls and gilded mirrors; the ballroom—more columns here, and a ceiling copied from the Queen's House at Greenwich; and at the far end of all, the tiny chapel. Everywhere, sumptuous ceilings and chimney-pieces and door cases.

Behind these elegant rooms lie the service quarters: long, stone-flagged passages strung with ancient bell-wires, cavernous pantries and still-rooms, larders as vaulted and ice-cold as castle dungeons, stone sinks as big as horse-troughs—and in the middle of all this, as far from the dining-room as you could possibly be, the kitchen. What a

kitchen! A real pantomime giant's affair with everything to mammoth scale. A monstrous range; a griller big enough to roast an ox; the remains of a dresser which must have been designed to take dishes the size of motor-tyres. Rows of hooks for hams mounted almost to the smoke-blackened ceiling, twenty-five feet or so above the stone-flagged floor.

The staircase, probably not the original one, is unimpressive—you will have to watch your head in one or two places—and there is not much to see upstairs. But the bedrooms, all opening one out of the other in the friendliest and, one would have thought, the most inconvenient manner, are charming enough: low-ceilinged, prettily corniced, spacious, and sunny. In the night-nursery, tiny coat-hangers—roughly fashioned, I expect, by some estate carpenter—hang in the cupboard: and once, peering from a back-bedroom window, I was startled to find myself looking almost at arm's length straight into the stony bulging eyes of a gargoyle on the church tower.

Lydiard Tregoz is not, you see, a very grand house. True, it has something like fifty rooms, but none of them is spectacular in size,

and, despite the elegance of their decoration, life here has, it seemed, never been on what you would call a magnificent scale. Until a few years ago the house was still lighted by oil lamps and candles, and water was pumped daily from a well. It still has no bathroom. It is more than forty years since fires were lighted beneath those richly decorated chimney-pieces. For a time the house was left, so to speak, for dead. And yet, unlike more recently deserted houses of its kind, there is no atmosphere of sadness or self-pity here. The house has kept its self-respect and is now being rewarded by the prospect of another century or so of useful life.

Just how timely this rescue work has been I was able to see for myself, for here and there repair work was in progress and it was possible to see, behind the smiling white



Part of the ceiling of the ballroom at Lydiard Tregoz

'Country Life'

paint, the rose-patterned papers and beeswaxed floorboards, the patched and ancient structure which sustained them all, a structure which in places had become dangerously frail or over-strained. Rust, decay, lichen and moss—these, says John Piper, are the signs of nature's jealousy in the face of man's achievements, signs of her constant struggle to reclaim into her arms the stone, the timber, and the clay. Indeed, up in the attics and among the roof timbers and nearest to the elements, nature and architecture became almost indistinguishable. Here, in the dark, where the bats swooped and bumped and the wind hissed gently through the slipping tiles, it was like standing in some mountain forest. Above my head were knotted the huge crooked timbers, eaten away by age, shaken by storm, but still for the most part sturdy and serviceable. At my feet a massive great lead-lined gutter threaded its clumsy way across the ceiling rafters, carpeted with the twigs of the jackdaws' nests.

Do you remember Ruskin's description of the old tower of Calais Church? 'A grey-headed wreck', he wrote, 'having no beauty yet neither asking for pity: not as ruins are, feebly or fondly garrulous of better days, but useful still, going through its daily work, as some old fisherman grey by the storm yet drawing his daily nets'. I thought of these words as I descended the stairs into the dusty sunlight and passed back through the silent, patiently waiting saloons to have one more look into the tiny jewelled church. Here history is written in gold and marble, in heraldry and faded pompous epitaphs. But, exciting as all this was to the eye and to the mind, it was not so moving to the heart as that dark thicket of roof timbers above the old house—a place, to quote Ruskin again, where all seemed continuous and the words, 'from generation to generation', understandable.—*Home Service*

[Lydiard Tregoz may be seen by arrangement with the caretaker]



## Portraits from Memory—VI

## George Santayana

By BERTRAND RUSSELL, O.M.

**I** FIRST met Santayana on a roof in Temple Gardens beside the Thames one warm evening in June, 1893. After a day of sweltering heat, the temperature had become delicious and the view of London was intoxicating. I had just finished the Mathematical Tripos after ten years of arduous preparation and was about to embark on the study of philosophy. My brother, through whom I came to know Santayana, informed me that he was a philosopher. I therefore looked upon him with great reverence, all the more so as my mood was one of expansive liberation. He had at that time large lustrous eyes of considerable beauty. I listened to him with respect, since he seemed to embody a difficult synthesis, namely, that of America and Spain. I cannot, however, remember anything of his conversation on that occasion.

As I came to know him better I found some sympathy and much divergence. He professed a certain detachment which was not wholly sincere. Although both his parents were Spanish, he had been brought up in Boston and taught philosophy at Harvard. Nevertheless he felt himself always an exile from Spain. In the Spanish-American war he found himself passionately on the Spanish side, which is perhaps not surprising, as his father had been Governor of Manila. Whenever his Spanish patriotism was involved, his usual air of detachment disappeared. He used to spend the summers at his sister's house in the ancient city of Avila, and he described to me once how the ladies there would sit at their windows, flirting with such male acquaintances as passed by, and would make up for this pastime afterwards by going to confession. I rashly remarked: 'It sounds a rather vapid existence'. He drew himself up, and replied sharply: 'They spend their lives in the two greatest things: love and religion'.

## 'Gentle Pity' for the Northern Philosophers

He could admit into the realm of his admirations the ancient Greeks and the modern Italians, even Mussolini. But he could feel no sincere respect for anyone who came from north of the Alps. He held that only the Mediterranean peoples are capable of contemplation, and that therefore they alone can be true philosophers. German and British philosophies he regarded as the stumbling efforts of immature races. He liked, in northern countries, athletes and men of affairs. He was a close friend of my brother, who made no rash attempts to penetrate the arcana. But towards me, as towards other northern philosophers, his attitude was one of gentle pity for having attempted something too high for us. This, however, never interfered with pleasant relations, as my patriotic self-confidence was quite equal to his.

Santayana in private life was very similar to what he was in his books. He was suave, meticulous in his ways, and seldom excited. A few days before the battle of the Marne, when the capture of Paris by the Germans seemed imminent, he remarked to me: 'I think I must go to Paris, because my winter underclothes are there, and I should not like the Germans to get them. I have also left there the manuscript of a book on which I have been working for the last ten years; but I don't mind so much about that'. However, the battle of the Marne obviated the necessity for this journey.

One evening in Cambridge, after I had been seeing him every day for some time, he remarked to me: 'I am going to Seville tomorrow. I wish to be in a place where people do not restrain their passions'. I suppose this attitude is not surprising in one who had few passions to control. He relates in his autobiography one occasion when my brother succeeded in rousing him to a certain warmth of feeling. My brother had a yacht on which Santayana was to accompany him. The yacht was moored and could be approached only by a very narrow plank. My brother ran lightly across it, but Santayana was afraid of falling into the mud. My brother reached out a hand to him, but unfortunately Santayana's balance was so bad that both fell with a splash into the semi-liquid mire of the river bank. Santayana relates with some horror that on this occasion my brother used words which he would not have expected an earl to know.

There was something rather prim about Santayana. His clothes were always neat, and even in country lanes he wore patent leather button

boots. I think a person of sufficient intelligence might perhaps have guessed these characteristics from his literary style.

Although not a believing Catholic, he strongly favoured the Roman Catholic religion in all political and social ways. He did not see any reason to wish that the populace should believe something true. What he desired for the populace was some myth to which he could give aesthetic approval. This attitude naturally made him very hostile to Protestantism, and made people with a Protestant way of feeling critical of him. William James condemned his doctor's thesis as 'the perfection of rottenness'. And, although the two men were colleagues for a great many years, neither ever succeeded in thinking well of the other.

## Function as a Critic

For my part, I was never able to take Santayana very seriously as a technical philosopher, although I thought that he served a useful function by bringing to bear, as a critic, points of view which are now uncommon. The American dress in which his writing appeared somewhat concealed the extremely reactionary character of his thinking. Not only did he, as a Spaniard, side politically with the Church in all its attempts to bolster up old traditions in that country, but, as a philosopher, he reverted in great measure to the scholasticism of the thirteenth century. He did not present this doctrine straightforwardly as neo-Thomists do; he insinuated it under various aliases, so that it was easy for a reader not to know where his opinions came from. It would not be fair to suggest that his views were completely those of medieval scholastics. He took rather more from Plato than St. Thomas did. But I think that he and St. Thomas, if they could have met, would have understood one another very well.

His two chief works in pure philosophy were *The Life of Reason*, published in 1905, and *Realms of Being*, published between 1927 and 1940. He deals with the life of reason under five headings: reason in common sense, in society, in religion, in art, and in science. I do not myself feel that this work is likely to attract a reader to the sort of life which Santayana considers rational. It is too quiet, too much that of a mere spectator, too destitute of passion, which, though it may have to be controlled, seems, to me at least, an essential element in any life worth living. His *Realms of Being*, which was his last important philosophical work, deals successively with essence, matter, truth and spirit. In this, as in his other philosophical books, he does not trouble to argue, and much of what he says, particularly as regards essence, ignores much work which most modern philosophers would consider relevant. He completely ignored modern logic, which has thrown much new light on the old problem of universals which occupied a very large part of the attention of the scholastics. Santayana's *Realm of Essence* seems to assume, at any rate in some sense, the reality of universals. It would be rash to say that this doctrine is false, but it is characteristic of Santayana that he calmly assumes its truth without taking the trouble to offer any arguments in its favour.

## A Too Polished Style

Although most of his active life was spent as a professor of philosophy at Harvard, he was perhaps more important from a literary than from a philosophic point of view. His style, to my mind, is not quite what a style ought to be. Like his patent leather boots, it is too smooth and polished. The impression one gets in reading him is that of floating down a smooth-flowing river, so broad that you can seldom see either bank; but when, from time to time, a promontory comes into view, you are surprised that it is a new one as you have been unconscious of movement. I find myself, in reading him, approving each sentence in an almost somnambulistic manner, but unable, after a few pages, to remember what it was all about. Nevertheless, I owe him certain philosophical debts. When I was young, I agreed with G. E. Moore in believing in the objectivity of good and evil. Santayana's criticism, in a book called *Winds of Doctrine*, caused me to abandon

(continued on page 511)



# NEWS DIARY

September 16-22

## Wednesday, September 16

Dr Adenauer, Federal German Chancellor, proposes resumption of Franco-German discussions 'on matters of common interest'

Dr. Malan's Bill to place coloured voters on a separate electoral roll rejected in South African Parliament

## Thursday, September 17

Mr. Dulles, U.S. Secretary of State, opens general debate in United Nations Assembly

General Affairs Committee of Council of Europe in Strasbourg proposes that an international conference should meet early next year to decide future status of the Saar

The Bank rate reduced from 4 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent

## Friday, September 18

President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Thorneycroft, tells meeting of signatories of General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs in Geneva that the world's chronic unbalance of trade cannot be cured without a fundamental change in American commercial policy

Mr. John Elliot, is appointed to succeed Lord Hurcombe as chairman of the British Transport Commission

## Saturday, September 19

Mr. Vyshinsky asks United Nations General Assembly for a special debate on proposal made by Chinese and North Koreans that the Korean peace conference should be enlarged

Squadron Leader Neville Duke breaks world air speed record for 100-kilometre closed circuit

## Sunday, September 20

Talks between Russian Ministers and a North Korean delegation concluded in Moscow. Published statement includes details of Russian plans for rehabilitation of North Korea

United Nations authorities in Korea hand over to Indian custodian troops nearly 2,000 Chinese communist prisoners of war who have refused repatriation

Services held throughout the country to commemorate Battle of Britain Sunday

## Monday, September 21

Anglo-Egyptian talks on Suez Canal zone resumed after General Robertson's return to Cairo

M. Bidault, French Foreign Minister, agrees to meeting with Dr. Adenauer

Russian jet fighter flown into American air base in Korea by a communist pilot

## Tuesday, September 22

Three Western Powers oppose Russian proposal to discuss again at United Nations the composition of the Korean political conference

Dismissal is announced of Prime Minister of Soviet Republic of Georgia

Roman Catholic bishop in Poland sentenced to twelve years imprisonment for spying



The North Korean delegation photographed on arrival at Moscow railway station on September 10. At the microphone is Marshal Kim Il Sung, the North Korean Prime Minister; on his right is Mr. Molotov



Queen Juliana of the Netherlands unveiling Arnhem on September 17, the ninth anniversary of the liberation of the city

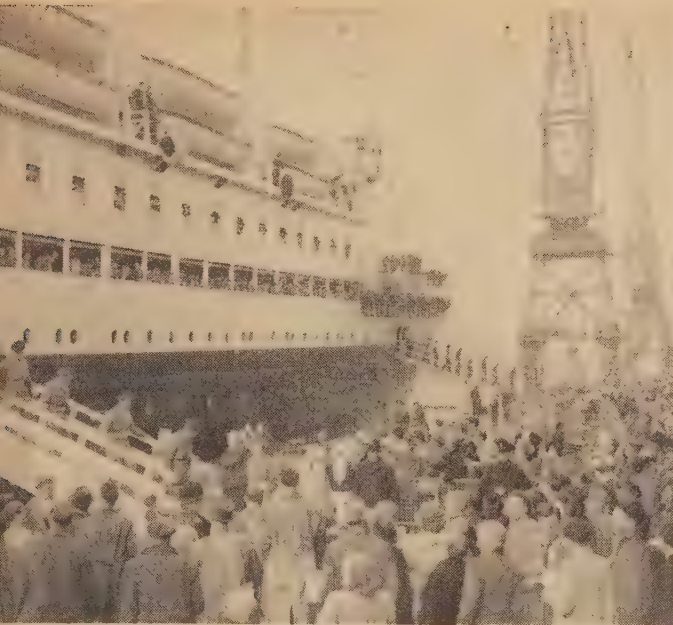
Left: jet fighters which took part in the September 15 (the thirteenth anniversary) parade at Sunderland flying boat was on view during the ceremony



Striped blooms of the Dahlia Society

Left: a model of the new buildings at the Airport. Detail of the model of the week by the





British soldiers, recently released from prisoner-of-war camps in Korea, arriving at Southampton on September 16 in the 'Asturias'. The photograph shows them disembarking while relatives waited to greet them



General view of the opening session on September 15 of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Mr. Vyshinsky, the Russian delegate, again raised the question of the membership of the Korean political conference. Inset: Mrs. Pandit of India who has been elected President of the Assembly. She is the first woman to hold the post



...orial to British forces at ...ary of the battle

... of Britain fly-past on ...ver Tower Bridge. The ... week's celebrations



The Mau Mau 'General' Kerihinya (left) and his 'adjutant' Oneko after their surrender to a Home Guard post near Nyeri, Kenya, last week



Holland in the National ...w in London last week

... the new central terminal- ...nstructed at London ...e plan for the develop- ... were announced last ...ter of Civil Aviation



A scene from Act 2 of 'Arabella' with which the Bavarian State Opera (on their first visit to this country) opened their festival of operas by Richard Strauss last week. The title role is played by Miss Lisa della Casa, and Mandryka by Mr. Hermann Uhde (right foreground). The other operas being performed are 'Die Liebe der Danae' and 'Capriccio'

Left: a scene from 'All's Well that Ends Well' at the Old Vic, with Claire Bloom as Helena, William Squire as Lafeu (behind her) and Laurence Hardy as the King of France



## Party Political Broadcast

# The Labour Party's Point of View

By the Rt. Hon. C. R. ATTLEE, O.M., C.H., M.P., Leader of the Opposition

**T**HE holiday season is drawing to a close and I hope that those of you who have been taking a holiday have had an enjoyable time. In a few weeks parliament will be meeting again, and it is, therefore, an appropriate time to consider some of the problems which will come up for discussion. I want to give you this evening the point of view of the Leader of the Opposition and to speak to you both on foreign and home affairs.

You will recall that on May 11 the Prime Minister made an important speech in the House of Commons in which, among other things, he proposed there should be a conference between the leading Powers without delay in order to have a full discussion of outstanding questions. On behalf of the Opposition I welcomed this initiative, and in this I think I expressed the views of the majority of the people of this country. In particular, I said I hoped that such talks might lead to a reduction of the burden of armaments which is pressing so heavily on the people in so many countries.

Mr. Eden, the Foreign Secretary, was away, having to undergo a serious operation and, unfortunately, the Prime Minister, almost immediately after his speech, was taken ill. We are all glad to hear that the health of both of them is much improved. But it was a misfortune that the initiative could not be followed up. Instead, a meeting was arranged between Lord Salisbury, as acting Foreign Secretary, the American Secretary of State, Mr. Dulles, and the French Foreign Minister, M. Bidault, in Washington. I was not very hopeful of any very useful result coming out of this meeting and my expectation proved to be correct. Since that time, it seems to me that the general international situation has deteriorated.

Look first at the Far East. We all rejoiced when the armistice was signed and at the return of the prisoners-of-war, but, of course, this was only a first step to peace. The armistice is intended to lead to a settlement of the Korean dispute.

But there have been a number of disturbing incidents. First, there was the disagreement over the composition of the political committee to be set up by the United Nations. There was a fairly general desire that India, which played a distinguished part in the negotiations for an armistice, should be a member. The United States, however, strongly opposed this—apparently on the ground that only states whose troops had actually taken part in the fighting should have a say, and, backed by the South American states and two others, put up so much opposition that India declined nomination, thus depriving the committee of the assistance of a representative of the leading democratic Asiatic state. This tendency to regard as suspect everybody who is not entirely in accord with the American point of view is, I think, very dangerous, and seems to be a reflection in the foreign field of certain tendencies towards intolerance which are disturbing the minds of many people.

There has also been a hardening of the opposition of the United States to the occupation by the People's Government of China of the seat on the Security Council which belongs to China by right. We have always held that, regardless of the colour of the government, it is only commonsense to recognise an effective government. The continued occupation of this

seat by the discredited faction of Chiang Kai-shek is an obstacle to progress towards peace. In our view, as soon as support for aggression has ceased, the effective Chinese Government should take her place at the United Nations.

Still more disturbing have been the bellicose speeches of Mr. Syngman Rhee urging the conquest of North Korea. A united Korea is desirable, but cannot be brought about by force. Indeed, the war started precisely because of the attempt of the North Koreans to do this. Military action was taken to stop aggression—not to aid the ambitions of Mr. Rhee. Similarly, we have no interest in reinstating Chiang Kai-shek. It is for the peoples of China and Korea to decide what governments they desire to have.

There was, further, the sixteen-nation declaration recently made, to which the British Government subscribed, that in the event of a breach of the armistice it might not be possible to confine the war to Korea. We have always opposed any extension of the conflict as likely to bring about a world war. I do not think that the constant reiteration of threats is a useful way of conducting foreign affairs or is likely to have the desired effect. I am, of course, aware that the Communists would welcome any signs of disunity among the western allies and there are some people in the United States who react violently to even the mildest criticism of American policy. I desire the closest co-operation with our friends in America, but this does not preclude us from stating our own point of view. If we think that our friends are following an unwise course, true friendship demands that we should say so. I think the democratic world expects a very definite lead from Britain. We have a long experience in Asia and our Commonwealth relations with the leading Asiatic Powers give us unrivalled opportunities for promoting understanding between Asia and the western world.

But the proposed conference at a high level was mainly concerned with the broad problem of getting a better relationship with the U.S.S.R., especially in regard to the German problem. The Prime Minister was, I think, rightly endeavouring to follow up the signs of a slackening of tension which followed the death of Mr. Stalin. He recalled the common interest which both Russia and the western countries have in preventing the rise of another militarist and aggressive Germany. I was glad to see that Mr. Dulles, in his speech at the United Nations, referred to this point. I am sure that it is wise to emphasise points of agreement. It is much more useful than reiterating demands from the other party. Just as in the case of Korea, the unity of Germany is desirable but cannot be brought about by force by either side. I am apprehensive lest a long continuance of the present position may lead to a resurgence of the dangerous forces in Germany.

There are two other problems which urgently require settlement; one is the conclusion of the Austrian Treaty and the other is a settlement of the question of Trieste. I have recently been spending a holiday in Yugoslavia, and was interested to see how in that country, which has suffered so heavily in war, steady progress is being made. There we have a regime which was originally developed on the Russian model but which refused to sacrifice the interest of the people to the policy of a foreign power. Despite

efforts to coerce the Yugoslav Government, it has got through a difficult time and, what is most interesting, is developing a system very different from that of totalitarianism. There are many signs that in the satellite countries, such as Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, there is great discontent with the rule of the Communist dictators. I have always held that in time these regimes will fail to maintain themselves. The recent disturbances in east Germany point in the same direction. It may be that the rulers of the Kremlin will realise that their policy is a failure and they may seek friendship with neighbouring peoples without domination.

Four months have passed since the Prime Minister's speech and I fear that an opportunity for making progress towards peace and the reduction of armaments may have been lost. It may be that the chances of success were not very great, but it is vitally important that Britain should not only give a lead but should follow it up.

I have only touched on two points of foreign policy because I now wish to say something of home affairs. The Conservatives have now been in power for nearly two years and it is a good time to take stock. The Government were fortunate in that the terms of trade turned in favour of Britain; that is to say that, contrary to what the Labour Government experienced when in office, prices of the things which we wanted to buy from abroad fell, while prices of what we had to sell remained stable or even rose. Other favourable factors have also helped to ease the problem of the balance of payments.

But everyone recognises that the underlying problem of how this country, with its 50,000,000 people, is to earn its living in the modern world has not been solved. The position is still precarious and liable to become dangerous through factors over which we have no control. It is, therefore, pertinent to consider what the Government has done and what has been its policy in regard to this major problem. The answer to the first question is very little, and to the second that there is no discernible policy. Instead, there seems to be a wholly unwarrantable complacency.

Look first at the cost of living. If you compare prices in November 1951 with those ruling today you will find a whole range of increases: for instance, bacon, ham, bread, butter, cheese, margarine, sugar, all have risen in price; some of them very steeply, and this at a time when world prices have been falling. Much of this is due to the deliberate policy of the Government in reducing food subsidies and decontrolling. The natural result has been that the hard-pressed workers have sought increases in wages. This necessarily has an adverse effect on our ability to compete in the markets of the world.

Everyone agrees that one of the most essential measures needed to stabilise our economy is to increase production both for home use and for export, but what do we find? Under Labour, production rose every year, but according to an impartial authority—the world economic report of the United Nations—production in the United Kingdom dropped more in 1952 than in any other country except Denmark and Belgium. Real wages, that is the amount of goods you get for your wages, failed to increase. Only in this country did the cost of living increase more in 1952 than in 1951.



Greater food production at home is another essential, but we find that, while the average increase was four-and-a-half per cent. under Labour, it has dropped to one-and-a-half per cent. under the Tories. There is a rising tide of complaint in the countryside that the Government not only had no long-term, but not even a short-term, policy for agriculture. In the last twelve months agriculture has lost 16,000 workers. The metal and engineering trades are the most important from the point of view of increasing our exports, yet in the same period the numbers employed have gone down by 66,000, while manpower has increased in the less essential occupations. Again, it is most vital to utilise fully our coal resources, yet a team of British experts has issued a scathing report on the waste of fuel by British industry. The Government do little or nothing.

In these two years of tory rule the only policy which has emerged is that of surrendering the nation's needs to private interests. Despite the abundance in the Government of noble overlords, there has been no effective planning and no policy but that of optimistic and complacent drift.

Contrast this with Labour's policy. Six years of government directed to the interests of the country as a whole brought about a reconstruction after the losses of the war which evoked the admiration of impartial observers, but the major problem of Britain's economic future was not, and could not be, solved in so short a time. In Labour's new policy statement, 'Challenge to Britain', you will find that problem clearly stated and realistic proposals for dealing with it set out. It is no catchpenny appeal to the thoughtless, but makes a sober

appeal to thoughtful men and women of all classes. Its aim is the economic strength and independence of Britain.

We realise that the problems which we have to face cannot be solved by Britain alone. They are world problems and the Labour Party will seek their solution in co-operation with other countries and in particular with the members of the Commonwealth. In the world today there are still hundreds of millions of people living on the borders of starvation and the population of the world has been increasing more rapidly than food production.

The peoples of the less developed areas of the world in Asia and in Africa are demanding higher standards of life. It is the duty and also the interest of the great industrialised countries to help them: a duty because they should have the opportunity of developing their potentialities like the nations in the west—we are not entitled to enjoy a high standard of life at their expense. It is also to our interest, because where misery abounds the communist finds his opportunity. Further, we need markets for our products and these can only be found where there is an effective demand. We must, therefore, invest large sums in developing the food and raw materials of these countries in their and our own interest. We must also seek to expand our exports to the rest of the world. This means taking steps to see that capital and labour flow into the right channels. We must expand our engineering and steel industries. The steel industry which, under national ownership, had a record production, is being wantonly sold off to private persons. We shall restore the position.

It is clear that we shall be carrying on a mixed economy. Where it is in the national

interest we shall not hesitate to take into public ownership particular industrial units, but where private enterprise operates we shall do everything possible to assist and to stimulate those industries.

Export is important, but another means of helping to restore our economic position is by developing home production so as to lessen the need for imports. Here, agriculture holds the key position. We shall continue the steady advance in production which took place when Labour was in power but which has been lagging under the Tories. Labour will draw up a ten-year programme for agriculture which will give those engaged in the industry confidence so that they can go ahead. In the world of today Britain must become more self-supporting in food.

It is not my purpose tonight to describe in detail Labour's programme, but only to indicate the spirit of its approach and the broad outline of our policy. Full employment is, of course, essential, and also increased production. We hear a good deal of talk about incentives in industry, and this to Tories seems generally to mean higher profits for shareholders. We believe, too, in incentives, and among the most effective of these is the knowledge that hard work will benefit the mass of the people and not the privileged few. One of the reasons why production increased year by year when Labour was in power was because the workers knew that the objective of the Government was the good of the whole people. When Labour is returned to power again we shall continue our policy of fair shares. We shall continue to develop the social services and to build up a just society on the socialist principle of giving the opportunity for every individual to lead a full and happy life.

## Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles or talks printed in THE LISTENER but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

### Illness and the Man

Sir,—The term 'psychosomatic illness' is commonly used to denote an illness involving the body that cannot be satisfactorily treated by physical methods alone, since the patient's condition is due largely to emotional factors. 'A Physician and Teacher of Medicine' (THE LISTENER, September 17) must therefore have startled many listeners when he maintained that all illness is psychosomatic—including even 'so-called accidents', such as having one's leg broken by a bus.

There is no doubt that some 'so-called accidents' are unconsciously desired and brought about by the victim. But this, apparently, was not the physician's point. He gave as his main example of a 'psychosomatic' injury a slipped disc, caused by doing gymnastic stunts to amuse the mess 'at an age when such an accomplishment is not generally considered necessary'. All that can be implied by calling this injury 'psychosomatic' is that, if the person concerned had had a different temperament or interests, he would not have been exposed to this particular risk. It can be demonstrated along similar lines that the injuries received by passengers in a train crash are psychosomatic—since, if the victims' interests or pursuits had been different, they might not have been passengers on the train.

In this sense the statement 'all accidents are psychosomatic' is indisputable. But it is not, perhaps, of much importance; and if the term 'psychosomatic' is to be stretched so far beyond

its accepted sense, there is a danger that it may lose all useful meaning.—Yours, etc.,

MARGARET KNIGHT

Department of Psychology,  
University of Aberdeen

### The Price of Oil

Sir,—In his letter published in THE LISTENER of September 10, Commander Stephen King-Hall seems to question the opinion expressed by Mr. Richard Goold-Adams that, if and when Persian oil production is resumed, 'one of the main problems would be to make room for it'. It is true that in the long term no problem exists: Persian production would be absorbed by the natural and predictable growth of world demand for oil products. The problem, however, is not one of the long term. If Persia is to derive immediate benefit from her mineral wealth, then crude oil must start to flow into world markets as soon as possible. There is at the moment something of a glut of crude oil; it follows that Persian crude oil—and, if the country is really to benefit, that oil must flow in considerable quantities—could find a market only at the expense of other producing countries. To cut down production in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, or Iraq would be extremely unpopular in those countries. It would in any case hardly be a fair return for their loyalty to their own agreements with oil companies.

Commander King-Hall asks why Persian pro-

duction should not be used to reduce the price of oil. There are many reasons why this suggestion is impracticable. In the first place, the world oil industry at any given moment can only handle a certain amount of its raw material; that amount is governed by shipping space available (at the moment there is admittedly a global surplus), by storage capacity, by refining capacity, and above all by consumer demand. To bring more oil into the market than the industry can handle at any given moment—if companies were insane enough to try it—would put the price of products up, not bring them down, since to accommodate the oil additional facilities would have to be created. The cheapest way of storing oil is in the ground. Secondly, oil comes from many different sources; increase of production in one particular source, though obviously strengthening competitively the company which operates that source, does not materially affect the average level of costs of production throughout the world. Commander King-Hall may say that a company in this position should seek to undersell its competitors and so reduce the cost of oil products to the consumer. But in fact no single company or group of companies owns enough free oil—that is, oil which can be placed on the international market—to make such action effective. If a company were in a strong enough competitive position, the cost of creating facilities to dispose of cut-price crude oil would in itself act as a deterrent.

Finally, Commander King-Hall asks for an





### *What would grandfather say, Mr. Horsefall?*

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explanation of recent movements of oil prices. Without laying any claim to wisdom, I can probably help him. Oil prices are governed by a world structure which is particularly sensitive to price movements in the United States. Some people—myself among them—have recently criticised this structure on the grounds that it fails to take into account certain relevant factors in present-day oil economics. But no one has suggested that the structure is not necessary in one form or another; there may be a case for amending it, but there is none for ending it. I cannot, Sir, trespass on your space so far as to present all the arguments I should like to put forward on this subject; I must however ask Commander King-Hall if he has ever compared post-war increases in the price of oil products, free of tax, with those of any other commodity, or if he knows of any other industry which has made so large a capital investment, and to such good effect, in economy and efficiency for no other reason than to keep prices down.

Yours, etc.,

Carshalton Beeches BERNARD R. DAVIES

### Rodin's 'Burghers of Calais'

Sir,—Mr. Pedder raises the question of the pedestal and setting of Rodin's famous statues and quotes the sculptor as approving both the site and the pedestal. Whatever the motive of Rodin's 'approval', it was not in keeping with his original conception. For your interest I quote from a conversation between Rodin and Paul Gsell which is recalled in the latter's book *Art, by Rodin*, page 91:

I wished, as you know, to fix my statues one behind the other on the stones of the square, before the Town Hall of Calais, like a living chaplet of suffering and sacrifice. My figures would so have appeared to direct their steps from the municipal building toward the camp of Edward III; and the people of Calais of today, almost elbowing them, would have felt more deeply the tradition of solidarity which unites them to their heroes. It would have been, I believe, intensely impressive. But my proposal was rejected and they insisted upon a pedestal which is as unsightly as it is unnecessary. They were wrong. I am sure of it.

Yours, etc.,

Blackheath, S.E.3 VICTOR PASMORE

Sir,—One of the essentials of monumental sculpture in the open air is a simple and beautiful silhouette. The work of Rodin, as can be seen from the present position of the Burghers of Calais, only too clearly does not possess this quality. In fact the works of Rodin, great as they are, do not lend themselves to open air exhibition. Could we not emulate the excellent example of the city of Basle, where a reproduction of this group is exhibited at ground level (the only possible position), but in an open portico which gives the right quality of setting for the work.—Yours, etc.,

The Abbey Art Centre and Museum, W. OHLY  
New Barnet Director

### Science for Its Own Sake

Sir,—I do not know why Mr. Michael Shayer should state (*THE LISTENER*, September 17) that Dante puts Ulysses in Hell for his 'presumption and impiety' as an explorer of the lands beyond the Pillars of Hercules. It is quite clear that Ulysses is put there as a Fraudulent Counsellor, because he helped to trick the Trojans, ancestors of Dante's sacred city, into admitting the wooden horse into Troy. It is also obvious that Dante admires Ulysses, who is treated with great respect by both Dante and Virgil, and is clearly in Hell for purely technical reasons.

Dante puts the scientists not in Hell but in Limbo, where the virtuous heathen go. There we find Democritus, Thales, and the rest—all bold and original thinkers.

Dante, like the ancients, did not distinguish between philosophy and science. He was clearly on Sir Edward Appleton's side, and put these men together in the abode of the meritorious under the lead of Aristotle, '*maestro di color che sanno*'.—Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.3

ROBERT FRASER

### 'Letters from Graham Robertson'

Sir,—I feel sure that in his distinguished review of *Letters from Graham Robertson*—edited by Kerrison Preston—your critic in describing Graham Robertson as 'a narrow person' did not in any sense mean that he was narrow-minded, but having received one or two protests on this assumption, I feel constrained to say that he was a man of roving tastes and wide appreciation, though his opinions, whether one agreed with them or not, were conditioned by an almost anguished fastidiousness and by a temperamental bias which he recognised as peculiar to himself and in no sense oracular for others.

What a superb pen-picture your reviewer draws of the Sargent portrait!

Yours, etc.,

London, W.C.1

ERNEST MILTON

### Sir Douglas Newbold

Sir,—May I, as one who had the deepest affection and respect for Douglas Newbold and worked under him for many years in Khartoum, make a few comments on what your reviewer says about *The Life and Letters of Sir Douglas Newbold*, by K. D. D. Henderson, in *THE LISTENER* of September 10.

In my opinion, Newbold was one of those Englishmen with vision and sympathy who transformed the British colonial empire during the past twenty years or so from a system based on domination to one of partnership and free association. Now, the term 'partnership' with regard to the Sudan may be misleading, since it is generally used in reference to the development of multi-racial societies in countries where there are white settlers. In the Sudan there are no British settlers, and, therefore, what Newbold meant by 'partnership' in the Sudan was not a permanent way of life for two races living side by side. What he meant was the transition period of civil service co-operation, during which British and Sudanese officials would work together on a footing of equality (like the alternating white and black keys of a piano, as he once put it to me) before full self-government and possibly independence was attained, when the Sudanese would take over their country altogether.

I am unable to accept the statement in your reviewer's penultimate paragraph, that had Newbold lived he would have viewed present developments in the Sudan with 'grave misgivings'. I think it would be fair to say that, like many of us who have the welfare of the Sudan at heart, he would have preferred a slightly slower pace of progress towards self-government, and would have regretted the need to hurry imposed by political necessities. But essentially, I feel convinced that he would have been in favour of what is happening. I remember a meeting he had with the late Sir Stafford Cripps when the latter was flying through Khartoum on his mission to India in 1942. Newbold described to Cripps the steps the Sudan Government was planning to admit the Sudanese to a growing association in the government of their country. Cripps told Newbold that all that was admirable as far as it went, but that the Sudan Government would have to proceed at

a much faster pace in order to keep abreast with world developments, which had entered upon an altogether new tempo. Newbold repeated this to me with evident appreciation and approval. I cannot see how eleven years since that incident, and in a world in which not only India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and Burma have become independent, but also Libya and Eritrea, while the Gold Coast and Nigeria are rapidly advancing towards self-government, Douglas Newbold (a man of liberal and flexible mind) should have had about the Sudan's constitutional development the 'grave misgivings' your reviewer infers hypothetically from the life and letters presented in this book.

But it is Newbold himself who gives the conclusive answer to your reviewer in his letter to R. C. Mayall of March 10, 1945 (a fortnight before his death), quoted on page 441 of the book in question:

The answer to my 'dilution' circular was very disturbing. . . . I found that my circular was called the 'suicide' letter in Kordofan. Well, a mother has to commit 'maternal suicide' when her boy grows up, in a way, and both gain by it. My mother hated the 'apron-string' policy and I wish she were here to speak wisdom to some of these Governors and D.C.'s. . . . They all wanted perpetual supervision and the Political Service (British Governors, D.C.'s) to stay till Local Government was really efficient and set! I told them that they were aiming at a heavenly state, which was usurping the Almighty's prerogative.

Yours, etc.,

Send EDWARD ATIYAH

### 'Esprit'

Sir,—I regret that any words of mine should have given offence to the *Rédacteur en Chef* of *Esprit*, a review for which I have the greatest respect and with which I often find myself in agreement. What I said about 'some of the French intellectuals grouped round the review *Esprit*' I should have thought a commonplace. I did not say they were Stalinists or sympathisers with day-to-day communist policy. I simply suggested that capitalism inspires them with excessive feelings of guilt and that they believe there is something fundamentally just about communism, that, as I put it in my broadcast, 'communist theory and communist policy have . . . a hard core of righteousness'. After looking up back numbers of *Esprit* I do not feel inclined to withdraw what I said. (After all, I was not accusing M. Domenach or his colleagues of anything disgraceful: it seems to me a good thing that French Christians should feel free to express views unwelcome in *bien-pensant* circles; but the *bien pensants* are not always wrong.) My point is well illustrated by some words written by M. Domenach himself in *Esprit* of July 1952.

He wrote, at a moment when it seemed likely the French Communist Party would have to face a severe repression:

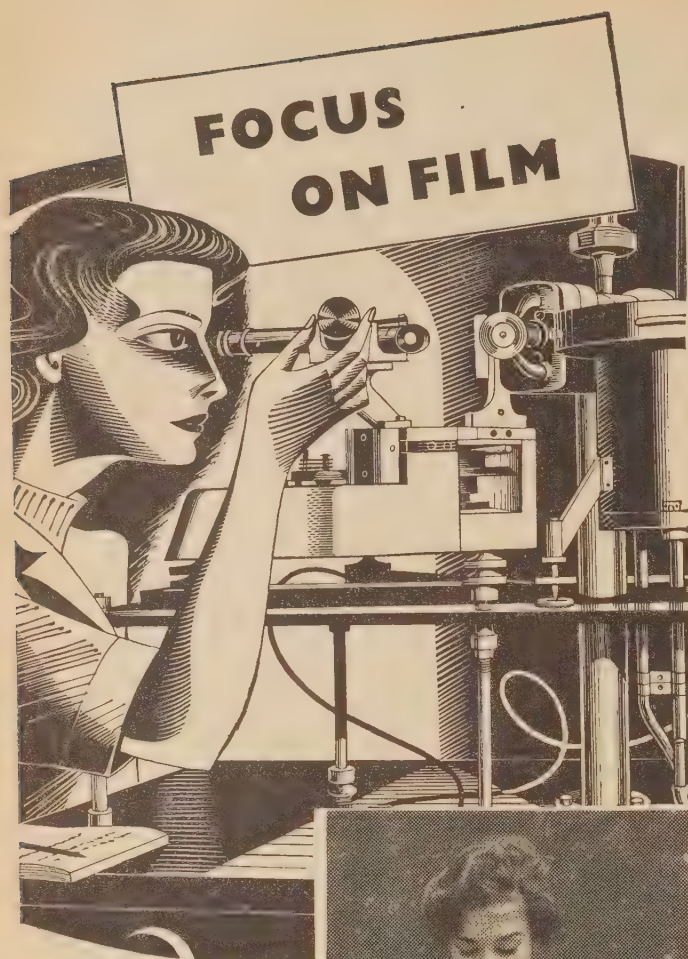
Tant qu'il n'y aura pas en France d'autre organisation ouvrière puissante et intégrée, le parti communiste gardera ce visage ambigu: une face tournée vers Staline et figée dans un conformisme triste, l'autre marquée des rides, des blessures et aussi de la joie d'enfance, de l'irrépressible espérance des opprimés; il restera cette première cible pour la revanche des possédés. Nous aimerions bien qu'il en aille autrement, que la S.F.I.O. soit un parti ouvrier et *Franc-Tireur* un journal socialiste, mais cela n'est pas, et comme le confirmait encore un récent sondage, la grande majorité des électeurs du parti, et peut-être même la majorité de ses adhérents, placent en lui un espoir et des revendications qui n'ont rien de spécifiquement stalinien.

It is handsome of M. Domenach to offer to send me a copy of his book on propaganda. I accept with gratitude.

Yours etc.,

The University, Leeds J. M. CAMERON





FOR THE NUMBER of ways in which oil serves us in our daily life we must thank the scientist as well as the men who actually produce the oil. The diffraction camera, the spectrometer and, of course, the test-tube are among the equipment with which Anglo-Iranian's research workers discover new uses for oil in industry, transport and the home.

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## Gardening

# Growing Bulbs Indoors

By CHARLES FUNKE

**M**ANY people have been successful in forcing their own bulbs, but the few hints I am going to give you here are to help those who ended up with a bowl of leaves and no flowers last winter.

Always make a point of buying the right size bulb, as an inferior one more often than not fails to flower properly. In fact, I advise you to tell your retailer that you are going to force the bulbs and not just use them for garden planting. The most popular bulbs in use for indoor culture are the hyacinths, including the Roman variety, tulips, narcissus, muscari and scilla; there are many others, but they are best left for those who care to experiment.

The most important stage in flowering your bulbs indoors is the actual planting and rooting. First, moisten your soil or fibre, fill your pot so that when the bulb is pressed lightly into position its nose rests about half an inch below the rim of the pot. Do remember to press the bulb and not screw it into position, as the latter method is liable to damage any developing rootlets. Give the pot a thorough watering.

To use a professional term, we next plunge the pot, this simply means placing the pot, or pots, in a well-drained shallow trench in the garden, and covering them completely with light soil or ashes to a depth of about three inches. To ensure that your bulbs develop a good root system, before they make much top growth, you should leave the pots plunged for about six or eight weeks. If you do not happen to have a garden, a dark cellar or out-house can be used; anywhere, in fact, where you can give the bulb a temperature of between 35 and 45 degrees during the rooting period.

The next stage is bringing the pots into the house, and if you are

aiming at having hyacinths in flower for Christmas or just after, and have planted them now, they should be ready for the move indoors about the last week or two of November. Just before moving them indoors make a final check to see that the pots are full of root. Simply place your hand, with fingers outstretched, across the top of the pot, turn it upside down, and lightly tap the base of the pot against a bench or table. The contents should then come out in an undisturbed ball and you can easily see just how much root the bulb has made. If very little root is showing, replace the pot under the ashes for a further week or two.

Assuming that the pots are brimming over with roots we are now ready to bring them into the house and gradually introduce them to full light. This is easily done by covering the pots for a day or so with a sheet of newspaper. The same applies to the amount of warmth: start them in a cool room, gradually giving them a warmer position. In fact, when once they have made a few inches of top growth, if you can manage a temperature of about 55 degrees to 60 degrees, they will flourish. From the time of planting until the foliage starts to wither, keep the soil moist: in fact, do not be afraid of over-watering.

Earliest of all I would recommend for hyacinths 'L'Innocence' as a good white, followed by 'Jan Bos' for a red and 'Bismarck' for a fine blue. Next plant tulips such as 'Brilliant Star', 'De Wet', or 'Prince of Austria'. For later planting, our old friend 'Helios' is a very good daffodil, and 'King Alfred' still takes a lot of beating.

One last word of advice: when you have achieved a first-class bowl of flowers, remember they will last that much longer if you put them in a cool room at night.—*Home Service*

## Portraits from Memory: George Santayana

(continued from page 503)

this view, though I have never been able to be as bland and comfortable without it as he was.

He had a considerable affection for England, and his *Soliloquies in England* is a book which any patriotic English person can read with pleasure. He wrote a novel in which my brother (for whom he had much affection) appears as the villain. He wrote an autobiography in several parts, which is chiefly interesting as exhibiting the clash between his Spanish temperament and his Boston environment. He used to boast that his mother, as a widow in Boston, worried her New England friends by never being busy about anything; and, when they came on a deputation to ask her how she got through the time, she replied: 'Well, I'll tell you. In summer I try to keep cool, and in winter I try to keep warm'. Admiration for this answer prevented him from feeling at home in New England.

He wrote a great deal about American culture, of which he had no high opinion. He gave an address to the University of California called 'The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy', the gist of which was to the effect that academic America is alien to the spirit of the country, which, he said, is vigorous but philistine. It had seemed to me, in my wanderings through American universities, that they would be more in harmony with the spirit of the country if they were housed in skyscrapers and not in pseudo-Gothic buildings ranged round a campus: This was also Santayana's view. I felt, however, a certain difference. Santayana enjoyed being aloof and contemptuous, whereas I found this attitude, when forced upon me, extremely painful. Aloofness and facile contempt were his defects, and because of them, although he could be admired, he was a person whom it was difficult to love. But it is only fair to counterbalance this judgment with his judgment of me. He says: 'Even when Russell's insight is keenest, the very intensity of his vision concentrates it too much. The focus is microscopic; he sees one thing at a time with extraordinary clearness, or one strain in history or politics; and the vivid realisation of that element

blinds him to the rest'. And he accuses me, oddly enough, of religious conservatism. I will leave the listener to form his own judgment on this matter.—*Home Service*

## A Benefit Night at the Opera

The chatter thins, lights dip, and dusty crimson  
Curtains are swept upwards. In one bound,  
Then, a rush of trumpets, brassy and vermilion—  
The vstaed nymphs sprawl in a sea of sound.

We give our best attention as we must.  
The music is fatal and to be heard, for  
These glittering fountains vocalise our lust,  
And the whole brilliant scene sways on to murder.

The idyll interrupted by a cough,  
Coloratura soars into a fever.  
The vows complete, the priestess shuffles off.  
The conspirators' chorus mutter, and melt away and leave us,

A traitor and his stabbed tyrant, downstage in tears.  
(Masked revellers have grouped, as for a wedding)  
In stern beat start to life six scarlet halberdiers,  
Move with the music, and march to a beheading.

Lo! Wild applause proclaims a happy ending.  
Vendetta is achieved with clinking swords.  
Sheer from the battlements the Diva is descending,  
Rash in black velvet and resplendent chords.

MARTIN BELL



# Round the London Art Galleries

By DAVID SYLVESTER

THE Institute of Contemporary Arts is showing a very curious exhibition of photographic enlargements edited by a sculptor, a photographer, an engineer, and a pair of architects. It comprises over 100 photographic images and photographs of images: news photos, aerial photos, Victorian photos, X-ray photos, kinetic photos, photo-finishes, photo-montages, photograms, photographic illustrations from manufacturers' catalogues; and photographs of antique sculpture, Japanese scripts, Leonardo drawings, *Blaue Reiter* drawings, children's drawings, classical temples, figures from text-books ancient and modern of botany, geology, mechanics, and anatomy. Many of these pictures would provide material for pocket-magazines: some might be used for 'photo-quizzes'; some could be paired off to make funny 'juxtapositions'. The editors of this exhibition, however, being highbrows, have not sought to register such obvious points. On the contrary, they have displayed the exhibits with a consummate inconsequentiality. They have been equally unhelpful in the arrangement of the catalogue, in which the items are classified under headings, but in so arbitrary, inconsistent, and perverse a fashion as only to confuse, and in which no explanation is provided, beyond a handful of quotations, of an exhibition whose meaning and purpose seem as obscure and muddled as its title—'Parallel of Life and Art: an exhibition of documents through the medium of photography'.

All this, of course, plays right into the hands of middle-brows and others who are frightened of responding to what they cannot explain. But if the editors have failed to explain themselves, it is probably because they have tried to do too much. Perhaps the most important thing they have done is indicated by a quotation in the catalogue:

There are ten ways, say the Chinese academicians, of depicting a mountain: by drawing wrinkles like the slashes of a large axe, or wrinkles like hair on a cow's hide; by brush-strokes wrinkled like a heap of firewood, or like the veins of lotus leaves. The rest are to be wrinkled like the folds of a belt, or the twists of a rope; or like raindrops, or like convoluted clouds, etc.

Thus the exhibition hints at a host of ways in which things can be conveyed in art by forms which, when they appear in life, belong to utterly different things. Thanks to the camera, which must reduce all things to a uniform texture, and the enlarger, which can blow things up beyond all recognition, this exhibition is a vocabulary of visual metaphors which shows that a thing can be almost anything once you have removed its name. Hence it does not relate to surrealism, in which unexpected analogies are drawn between things that are recognised as such, which is to say, named (and this, surely, is why the editors have not made juxtapositions between similar images). It does relate to Giacometti and Francis Bacon. And it also relates to something as different from these as the illustration here. This Klee comes from an exhibition of 'Modern Swiss Prints and Drawings' in which there is nothing very rewarding other than the Klees.

The one-man shows at the Cimpel Gallery by two young painters

—Hugh Mackinnon, aged twenty-eight, and Donald Hamilton Fraser, aged twenty-four—throw light on the tiresome topic of influences. Just try suggesting to a painter (or his dealer or his wife) that a given influence is manifest in his work, and you will get a dirty look and a reminder that all painters undergo some influences, and then will either be informed that your painter had been painting like this long before he had seen anything of the work of whoever you thought had influenced

him (whereupon you will embark on an embarrassed disquisition about the amazing potency of the *Zeitgeist*), or you will be lectured on the difference between 'digesting' influences and merely 'reflecting' them. While you will probably let your interlocutor get away with this corny distinction, you may well doubt whether it has much relevance.

I first saw a painting by Mackinnon in 1948. It was clearly derivative from the architectural paintings of Paul Klee, but in a highly intelligent way, and in general showed no small promise. But when, last year, Mackinnon had his first one-man exhibition, he seemed to have come completely under the domination of Picasso. And in his present show he appears as a follower of Matisse. The new paintings are decent enough as 'school' works go—even by French standards—but they are not noticeably better than those which Mackinnon was doing five years ago.

All the work that Fraser has exhibited here and there during the past four years has employed a language deriving from the landscapes of Paul Klee. Until about a year ago he seemed to be using this language with an obtuse disregard for its character and limitations: thus he painted with a thick, opulent, impasto which combined with Klee's exquisite gradations of luminous colour to produce a cloying confection. Since the exhibition of paintings by Nicolas de Staël in London last year, he has modified his use of colour so that it suits his heavily encrusted paint. And he has suddenly

emerged as one of our few really imaginative and serious abstract or quasi-abstract painters. At the same time, it is not difficult to perceive his indebtedness to Klee and de Staël. Now, since Fraser's influences are easily ascertainable from his pictures, it might be said that he is still only 'reflecting' them, that he has not 'digested' them. Does this, even if it means anything, matter? The aim of art is not to be different, but to convince. Whereas Mackinnon's successive influences have produced only a succession of unrelated phases, Fraser has managed to use one influence after another to help him in the coherent development of an artistic personality. Surely this is what counts? And, if it is, then the difference between healthy and unhealthy influences is simply that the former help the artist to move forward.

Other things to be seen at present are the Sickerts (including a very early Dieppe painting) at the Beaux-Arts, and Halina Korn's moving little terracottas at the same gallery; examples of Jacques Villon's graphic art at the Redfern, which include some beautiful early works done before he took up cubism; lithographs and aquatints by Picasso at the Marlborough; and some drawings by Constantin Guys at the Renel Gallery in the Burlington Arcade.



'The Comic Opera Singer': a lithograph by Paul Klee at the Arts Council Gallery



# The Listener's Book Chronicle

## Seven Years in Tibet

By Heinrich Harrer. Hart-Davis. 16s.

A FEW EUROPEANS have found their way to Lhasa, some by invitation, others in disguise, but none has set out under such difficulties and none climbed to such heights of favour in the Tibetan capital as the author of this admirable book. A member of the 1939 Nanga Parbat Expedition under Aufschnaiter, he found himself behind barbed wire as soon as war broke out. Escape through India one would have thought impossible, but it was always in Herr Harrer's mind during his captivity at Dehra-Dun. His plan was to make for Tibet. In more than three years of meticulous preparation he read travel books, copied maps, collected money, gear, and provisions, studied Tibetan and Hindustani and trained hard for the physical ordeal of the journey. After unsuccessful attempts to escape in 1943 he finally succeeded in reaching Tibet in May, 1944. There he met another fugitive, his old friend Aufschnaiter, who was to share with him all that lay in store. Tibet tried to shake them off, but they clung on with great courage and ingenuity. By a miracle of endurance they even survived a winter journey across the worst country in Tibet with inadequate clothing, little food, and no shelter. The life of the nomads seemed luxurious by comparison.

After nearly two years they reached Lhasa. Traditional xenophobia could no longer restrain the hand of natural hospitality. Soon the noblest families in the land, amused by the stratagems and impressed by the determination which had brought them so far, were lavish with their acts of kindness. Eager to make repayment for their generous treatment, they determined to be as helpful as possible. In five years they won the confidence of the government and of the people as no official representative of a foreign power could ever have done in the capital. Their services were in constant demand; there was great scope for Aufschnaiter, an engineer by profession, and Harrer was kept busy with translation for the government. They were commissioned to make a survey of Lhasa and began work on plans for a modern drainage and electricity system. They were also employed to supervise irrigation projects and dam construction. Later Harrer became tutor and confidant of the Dalai Lama, solely responsible for presenting western learning to the young god-king. Soon the minds of both tutor and pupil began to dream and plan a new Tibet. Though these schemes were never to bear fruit, Harrer and his friend merit a high place among western servants of eastern princes.

The escape, the journey, the achievement in Lhasa—here is enough material for three great books already. But perhaps the most fascinating chapters are those describing the scene at the capital; the lonely god-king high up in the gold-roofed Potala, the grovelling pilgrims, the fluttering prayer-flags, the colourful festivals, the courtesies, the tea-drinking, the absence of hurry and strain, the cheerfulness, the lack of sanitation. Happily, too, Herr Harrer has been able to set down his experiences in a way which leaves nothing to be desired. The writing is effortless and smooth, with no unevenness to jolt the reader and distract him from the pleasures of his journey through the book. The translation is commendable and the illustrations are a valuable addition to the work.

Although a Tibetan could listen to the radio, subscribe to *Life*, or buy Crosby records, Harrer found outside influence only skin-deep. When

he accompanied his young master into exile in 1951, the prayer-wheels were still incessantly turning and the Tibetans still had no use for the kind of wheel we consider more effective. But later that year armoured cars entered the Holy City. The next European visitor will find Lhasa a very different place. We are lucky to have been given a last glimpse of the old Tibet by a man of such idealism, humanity, and affection for the Tibetan people.

## Sculpture: Theme and Variations

By E. H. Ramsden.

Lund Humphries. 36s.

This elegant and lavishly illustrated volume might, at first sight, be mistaken for one of those agreeable picture books the text of which is not indispensable to our enjoyment. In fact it is nothing of the kind; the author has an argument to expound and his photographs are illustrative. The text must therefore be considered, not simply as a commentary upon the pictures, but as a theoretical and critical essay upon the sculpture of our century. The author is, in many respects, admirably well qualified to undertake such a task. He has a very extensive knowledge of sculpture, both ancient and modern, is moreover a person of wide reading and deep culture, and one who is not unskilful in giving expression to his enthusiasms. These qualities show to advantage in the central and principal portion of the book in which the work of most of the important sculptors of the past fifty years are ingeniously classified and intelligently discussed. One could wish that Gimond and Manzu had been included in the list and one has difficulty in sharing the author's admiration for the work of Medardo Rosso, for Boccioni, for Naum Gabo and for Sir William Reid Dick; but this part of the book, together with the illustrations, does certainly provide a reasonably accurate picture of the development of modern sculpture and one for which readers may be grateful. Mr. Ramsden would have established a stronger claim upon their gratitude if he had deleted, or at least clarified, those passages in which he attempts to outline his views upon art and the universe. In the prologue and even more in the epilogue, one is arrested by so dense a tangle of more or less metaphysical ambiguities that one may be tempted to throw the book down in despair (which would be a pity). Here is an example:

A denial of content in any given instance is thus by inference a denial also of form, and in an art like sculpture a work that is devoid of form is as devoid of meaning as a paper flower is of life—whence the corollary that art, like life, has meaning in proportion to its form.

Reading at high speed one may overlook the difficulties involved in the notion of a formless statue and the consequent nonsensicality of the first statement; but there are other passages the absurdity of which one might have supposed to be apparent:

Sculpture being wrought of the very stuff of the earth is by nature an elemental art and as such is pre-eminently adapted to the exemplification of those virtues which we have come to regard as heroic.

These passages are characteristic of much that Mr. Ramsden writes; but he can, on occasion, speak with clarity and with sense and so one presses on through the maze of verbiage in the hope of coming at last upon something in the nature of a central argument. To look for such

a thing is, perhaps, a mistake. It may, however, be useful to conclude with a discussion of one view which does emerge—the view that there is some underlying harmony between the science, and more particularly the atomic physics, of the century and its art. It is in fact a variant of the sufficiently familiar fallacy that sensuous appearances are in some way made less real, or at least less important, because the scientist can describe what causes them in terms which are unfamiliar. Thus one may fancy that an artist's model ceases to be made of common flesh and blood because she may also be considered as a collection of whirling electrons, neutrons, etc. Or, as in the case of the aesthetic argument, that an artist will look at her in a new way because a scientist has found a new manner of looking at her chemical composition. The argument, like so many of the arguments in this book, is one which assumes altogether too much, pays too little regard to the facts of history, and is quite superfluous in a review of the sculptural achievement of the first half of the twentieth century.

## The Faber Book of Twentieth Century

Verse. Edited by John Heath-Stubbs

and David Wright. Faber. 12s. 6d.

Two objects or qualities of the *Faber Book of Modern Verse* were its complete avoidance of non-'modernist' poets and, by the rigorous exclusion of what its editor thought non-significant poets, its generous space for the very significant. It was thus an extremely tendentious anthology and, since its editor was highly sensitive and intelligent, from its first appearance in 1936 it exerted a strong and beneficial influence. No more striking indication of the change in the literary climate since that year could be gained than by a comparison of this new collection with that made by Michael Roberts. Here are 91 poets (the older anthology had 37 and included the Americans, whom the present editors funk), whose qualification is merely date of publication, not significance or style; and all demarcation is blurred—Chesterton rubs shoulders with Comfort, Sturge Moore with Muir, Palmer with Owen. In his introduction, Mr. Heath-Stubbs makes plain how deliberate this policy was: it is 'an anthology which is concerned with a broad general survey', including 'the best of every school'.

The editors must, of course, be allowed their policy or brief, but that does not prevent the reader from drawing the conclusion that an anthology compiled on such all-inclusive principles denotes a lack of ideas, of sharp opinions, of valid standards of judgment, on the part of the editors or whoever conceived it. The introduction is, in fact, a lamentable affair, which discusses modern poetry in the unilluminating and, indeed, inaccurate terms of Innocence and Experience, the Garden and the City, and the 'high style' and the 'low style'. Such lines cannot be drawn with any clarity against—to put the point at its simplest—the main characteristic of the verse of our century: the distinction between diction and ideas lingering on from the Victorian romantic tradition and those inaugurated by the poetic revolution of 1912 or thereabouts. It must be admitted, however, that the editors appear to have felt this difficulty: their 'broad general survey' is often a little half-hearted—an eight-line poem by Mr. Wilfred Gibson, a page of Binyon's 'Purgatorio' translation, two tiny pieces by Sturge Moore, four, quatrains by Lascelles Abercrombie, and so on.

The present book, then, must be judged not





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by the standards usually to be applied to anthologies under this imprint, but by the amount of casual pleasure which can be gained from individual poems. The editors must be congratulated on the inclusion of several authors it would have been easy to miss—Drummond Allison, for example, and Mr. Edgell Rickword (though the latter could have been far better represented). There are individual poems, too, which are extremely welcome, among them Mr. George Barker's 'Resolution of Dependence', and one or two by Harold Munro and Mr. Muir. On the other hand there is a good deal of material far too weak, even for this collection—the poems by Mr. Dannie Abse and Mr. Paul Potts, for instance. And although allowance must be made for the editors' intention not to duplicate any poem in the *Faber Book of Modern Verse*, they display a positive genius for picking the wrong poems from an author's work. There is no early Auden, no early MacNeice, and 'La Figlia che Piange'—in this context quite unmeaningful—is the only early Eliot: Rupert Brooke's frightful 'Funeral of Youth' is the longer of his two poems: the selections from De La Mare and Pound are for the most part utterly uninspired: Mr. Ralph Hodgson's 'Eve' turns up: Alun Lewis is shown in his worst light: the catalogue could be continued.

There is no doubt that the editors have gone about their job conscientiously and with goodwill, but these qualities are no proper substitute for a deep understanding of the nature of the age the anthology covers, and of the kind of poetry required by the times in which it is published. This is especially the case when common or garden taste so frequently falters.

### The Miners: Years of Struggle

By R. Page Arnot.

Allen and Unwin. 35s.

In the first volume of the official history of the Miners' Federation, published in 1949, Mr. Page Arnot traced the rise of the first permanent organisations among the mineworkers in Victorian times, the foundation of the Federation in 1889, and the succession of men and ideas which guided its policies down to a time just after the important Act of Parliament which first limited the hours of labour in coal-mines in 1908. His second volume deals with a major period in the history of coal-mining and of British industrial life—the years which ran from the strike of 1912 and the Minimum Wages Act of that year, through the first world war, the disputes of 1925-26 and the General Strike.

The material of the story, as before, is drawn from the records of the Federation itself, which are abundantly quoted. The need to follow events closely through intricate negotiations makes for complication from time to time; but the outlines of the prolonged dealings between the colliery owners and the miners are clear and well sustained. This makes an interesting and important book, for the miners at this period stood at the centre of national industrial politics, as they had never done before and possibly no longer do. The British staple industries of the nineteenth century declined between the two world wars, which may have been inevitable but certainly formed a national economic and social crisis of the first magnitude. The miners, partly as the largest number of workers in any of those trades, partly by the vigour of their leadership, stood out in their attitude towards it, almost as representative of organised labour, both in the years of their power and in the years of adversity which followed.

The narrative side of the book is very well done. Many strong and vivid personalities come to life again, such as Robert Smillie, Herbert Smith, A. J. Cook, W. P. Richardson, who outside of mining circles are already beginning to

be forgotten; and some others who still live, such as the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1925, Mr. Churchill, are to be seen in unfamiliar parts, in which they are not always at their best. The dead are called back and made to fight their battles over again, which Manzoni held to be the function of history; and it is certainly a most important part of it. Better still, some sense of the experience and the special values of the miner comes through; of the unseen multitude of men, so characteristic both of their class and their nation, who followed these leaders and were loyal to them, even in defeat.

As a critical history of those times, the book is less satisfactory. Mr. Arnot writes as a veteran of those wars, who stood close to the events he is describing and developed views about them at the time which he has not greatly changed since. Consequently, while the campaigns are described with verve and clarity, the strategy and the tactics of them are not brought to any new test, despite the volume of original research behind the narrative. Furthermore, Mr. Arnot has strong views, not only about the other side, but also about some of the officers on his own. His treatment of those whom he holds to have let down the miner's cause is not forgiving.

This official history of the Federation is therefore not a lifeless collection of documents or colourless narrative. It is written with a distinct line, by a man who knows his own mind and expects other people to know theirs, but who does not review the case again, like a judge on appeal, and does not hand down a verdict greatly different from that he reached at the time. There is, for example, no re-sifting of the economics of the industry; the evidence presented on that side is that put forward at the time in the numerous inquiries which were held into the industry. It would be unfortunate if some readers are encouraged by this lively retelling of old and great battles to ride off on the side-issues of generalship and personality, about which many views are possible, neglecting the true nature of the miner's quarrel with the industrial system to which he was subjected and the fundamental soundness of his judgment about it. The full story of the great coal dispute and of the General Strike will not be known until the records of the Mining Association, of other trade unions and the government of the day become available.

Meanwhile, it is as important that the nation should face the facts of its past as those of its future and particularly important at the present time when an indiscriminate nostalgia for an idealised recent past among educated people is becoming a serious obstacle to exact history. This volume of the history of the Miners' Federation, which is to be followed by a third, forms the most important contribution published for a long time towards the record of British industry and social politics in the nineteen-twenties.

### Ugo Foscolo

By E. R. Vincent. Cambridge. 25s.

This is a readable, lively account of the Italian poet's time in London, in which a large number of hitherto unpublished letters enliven rather than deaden (as often happens in works of research) the interest of the general reader. Professor Vincent's intention is to present the man as well as the poet, and although he confines himself to the last eleven years of Foscolo's life, in London, we get a feeling of almost Mediterranean exuberance and vivacity through the excitable temperament of the poet.

Foscolo was not an easy man to deal with, as the description here of his meeting with Wordsworth shows; but he managed to enter the important Holland House circle which had governed Whig England for years and of which

Professor Vincent gives an excellent portrait. Indeed, his pictures of the eminent men and women Foscolo came into contact with in London—such names as Caroline Lamb, Hobhouse, Byron—will be of value to students of our social scene, rather than to those of Italian poetry. But the literary side of Foscolo's life, the poetry he wrote in England, the journalism which alone kept him from starvation, his celebrated contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*, is also dealt with fully, if uncritically.

Foscolo was the greatest Italian poet of the early nineteenth century, a Byronic figure, as the author claims, eloquent, great-hearted, eccentric, a patriot and a scholar. When he came to England he was an exile never to return to his native land, to die eleven years later in pitiable distress, debt-ridden and forgotten. It is perhaps a criticism of our society that we lionised him to begin with and then, as his difficult character became more and more evident and he fell into debt, gradually turned our backs on him. All this Professor Vincent shows, illustrating the picture with a number of amusing vignettes and anecdotes in which our own countrymen come to life as much as the poet. It is a well-written book in which scholarship and lively writing are unusually well combined.

### Tragedy Is Not Enough. By Karl Jaspers.

Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

Next to Heidegger, Karl Jaspers probably ranks highest among existentialist thinkers on the Continent. But little of his work has as yet been translated into English. This small book forms only a section of his long work, *Von der Wahrheit (On Truth)*, but it is well translated and edited and is perhaps the best example of his thinking which has yet appeared over here. It is too concentrated to be easy reading, but it is by no means a book only for specialists in philosophy. Indeed the academic specialist may well miss its significance.

Jaspers began as a psychiatrist and philosophy for him is not so much a matter of logical argument as an attempt at deepening consciousness. His thought is precise and condensed. One needs quite often to re-read sentences to get their full meaning. But this is because his thought is always at close grips with reality and not involved or relaxed in abstraction. Actually the word 'existential' only occurs once in this book and the tragedy which is its theme is that inescapable human experience of which great poets have come nearest to distilling the ultimately inexpressible reality. In the degree that man faces the truth, he sees the ultimate disharmony of existence in the world of sense and time. In Jaspers' own words, 'because unity fails in our temporal existence, it appears to us in the guise of the tragic'. Tragedy is not absolute. We can conceive a realm of transcendent Being to which it does not belong. But only the vision which accepts the tragic situation in which humanly we find ourselves can truly experience the harmony beyond and with it a release from the fear, defiance or pessimism which haunt a merely sentimental view of life's horrors or disasters.

Many will feel that Jaspers misreads Christianity when he asserts that the believing Christian no longer recognises tragedy as genuine, because for him redemption has occurred and is perpetually renewed through grace. A dogmatic assurance of salvation may well blunt the sharp edge of tragic experience, but an imaginative understanding of the defeat and victory enacted on the Cross must surely deepen its meaning for those who inevitably re-enact the same mystery, in some measure, in their own lives. Jaspers himself acknowledges the universality of this mystery when he writes that in suffering failure, the loser conquers, though he conquers in a dimension in which victory and





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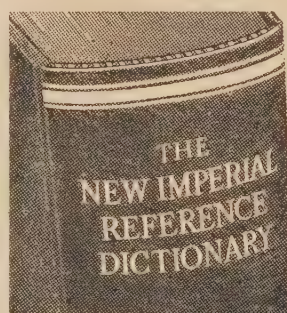
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defeat no longer count. But his interpretation of tragic knowledge is based upon various historical expressions of it in Indian or Greek drama or in Shakespeare. His analysis of 'Oedipus' and 'Hamlet' is central to his exposition, and his contention that Hamlet, far from being paralysed by indecision, is always

in action, is typically penetrating. But he is as much concerned with the perversions of the tragic sense as with its true expression. For him man has failed to be true to his destiny equally if he evades the tragic fact of human existence or if he embraces it for his own exaltation. For to pursue tragedy as an end is

fatal to that liberation from bondage to suffering through profound acceptance of it, which gives to the tragic its unfathomable meaning. This brief summary of the central theme of his book, which he develops so variously, may suggest how far from being an abstract philosophical disquisition it is.

## New Novels

For Esmé—with Love and Squalor. By J. D. Salinger. Hamish Hamilton. 10s. 6d.

The Nature of Love. By H. E. Bates. Michael Joseph. 10s. 6d.

The Best of Husbands. By Alba de Cespedes. Gollancz. 12s. 6d.

Man and Two Gods. By Jean Morris. Cassell. 12s. 6d.

BY an oversight Mr. J. D. Salinger's collection of stories, *For Esmé—with Love and Squalor*, is late in being mentioned. So I have the disadvantage of knowing what everyone else thinks about it; and, as it happens, the greater disadvantage of finding that I do not quite agree. Of course much of the praise the book has received is entirely justified. Mr. Salinger is a master of dialogue; he can represent the current American vernacular with almost frightening naturalism; and he can squeeze out of that frost-bitten dialect every drop of significance of which it is capable. He has also evolved a slightly stylised but extremely effective way of rendering the talk of children; the queer non-sequiturs and gaps of comprehension in conversation between children and adults are beautifully done. And this is not a trick—it can only be done by humour, sympathy and acute intuitive observation. All this appears charmingly in the opening scene of the title story, 'For Esmé—with Love and Squalor', between a solitary American soldier and a small English girl. I wish the soldier did not have to be battle-shocked later on, and rescued from suicidal depression by a letter from the same small girl. The theme of the unhappy adult saved by a child is a risky one at best, and it needs a good deal of patient circumstantial support to make it plausible. Mr. Salinger's laconic and elliptical style is just the thing to tip it over into the fashionable understated sentimentality. And the last story, 'Teddy', with its ten-year-old wonder-child of supernatural wisdom and attainments, needs no tipping over, it is well in the soup already. For the rest—the adolescents are adolescent, the adults get drunk and have crying jags, or shoot themselves, or do not shoot themselves: and whether this is a criticism of something, or just the way things are, we are not allowed to see. *Le mal du siècle*, I suppose. (We have often been told that this is the American century.) The positive values are fairly represented by the meditations of the egregious Teddy:

'The trouble is', Teddy said, 'most people don't want to see things the way they are. They don't even want to stop getting born and dying all the time. They just want new bodies all the time, instead of stopping and staying with God where it's really nice'.

If only Mr. Salinger would give up drink and women he could re-write *Little Lord Fauntleroy* for the 'fifties, and that would be ever so nice.

One trouble with the clever and attractive American short-story technique is that it has now really got to the point of leaving too much out. It is so smartly streamlined that there is no room left for the guts—character and a point of view. The three long stories in Mr. H. E. Bates' *The Nature of Love* compare with the Salinger ones as a leisurely piece of descriptive drawing to a Dufy sketch. The characters are fully and recognisably human, not only because they are drawn with unsentimental sympathy, but because they have a setting and a back-

ground done with as much care as the figures themselves. All three stories have a twist in the tail, but the suggestion of mechanism is avoided because the twists are cumulative; together they make the point that love is a more risky and unexpected affair than the unsensational opening situations would suggest. Coming to them after Mr. Salinger we realise with relief how varied human beings are, how rich their experiences, compared with the lost-innocence, sex-is-horrid, gin-and-heartbreak formula in which so much talented American fiction is at present enclosed. The first story, 'Dulcima', is a pitiful study of a clumsy country girl who goes to work for a savage, miserly farmer, out of sympathy, in the first place; then tries to make a sordid good thing out of it; and out of these mixed motives makes an unexpected tragedy. 'The Grass God' is especially notable for the patient detailed building up of a whole ethos and way of life, divorced from the clichés of fiction not by way of the unexpected, but simply by fidelity to things as they are. The last story, 'The Delicate Nature', is nearer to conventional literary models. It trenches on the Maugham territory of rubber planters and Chinese mistresses; but it is equally convincing. The gentleness and firmness with which Mr. Bates handles the long short story make one realise what an admirable medium it is.

I have not read Alba de Cespedes' first novel *Nessuno Torno Indietro*, though it was a best-seller in Italy and has been widely translated. This one, *The Best of Husbands*, is a remarkable piece of work. It is a woman's story, told by herself; and it is notable to us in the first place because it is all so unlike the contemporary Anglo-American world. Rome and the Abruzzi, in Fascist times and during the war, are not very familiar to us, and the book has a considerable documentary interest in consequence. But this is by the way; the aim is the psychological study of a woman's situation. The blurb compares the heroine rather inaptly to Nora of 'A Doll's House'; but the favourite reading of Alessandra and her mother is *Madame Bovary*; and they are both in fact accomplished bovaristes. I am not quite sure whether the author recognises this. Alessandra tells her own story, and self-criticism is rigorously excluded. She is right all along; it is her father, her husband, her boy-friends, her girl-friends, the whole social set-up, especially the men, that are wrong. A comprehensive indictment but the odd thing is that she makes out a pretty good case. On the evidence presented here an intelligent and sensitive girl in lower-middle-class Italy is doomed from the start. Surrounded by men who have not advanced beyond the harem ideal, by women who succeed through acquiescence, or by precarious snatches at forbidden fruit, what is she to do? This one tries education and a career, and is defeated by poverty, family hostility, and the war. She tries a marriage that should be a real partnership, and is defeated by her husband's political preoccupations and his

utter failure to understand that there is anything she could possibly want.

She is demanding, day-dreamy, possessive; just emancipated enough to resent being a mere sexual object, but not nearly emancipated enough to stand on her own feet; utterly bound to her man, with none of the wiry Anglo-American ability to become a semi-detached matron or a bachelor girl. If the ultimate tragedy is a little contrived, the build-up is not. How far we are meant to feel the element of falsity in the heroine's aspirations never becomes clear; but the book remains a compelling picture of a real series of dilemmas. And if anyone retains the Lawrentian belief that a girl's problems are solved by marrying an Italian this will suffice to dispel it.

The theme of Miss Jean Morris' novel *Man and Two Gods* is the ancient one of a duty that is also a crime. In this case the deed is the killing, in what is technically peace time, of an enemy agent who has succeeded in obtaining important secret information. Richard Bering is tried for murder, and is condemned by the civil courts. In the meantime war breaks out; what was before a crime now becomes a blow for the fatherland, and Bering is made a national hero. A quiet and scrupulous man, he grows obsessed by this contradiction. The same act cannot make him both a criminal and a hero. He looks on himself as Orestes (with whom the parallel is not in fact very close): but he is not to be fobbed off as Orestes was, with a dubious reconciliation and forgiveness: he needs to know where justice really lies: and the impassioned search for justice in this world of power-politics and manoeuvre inevitably leads to tragedy.

Miss Morris has had the courage to choose a big subject, and she has done a good deal to make it difficult for herself. The story is set in an imaginary central European country; it is completely successful in avoiding the suggestion of Ruritanian unreality, but it does rather suggest abstraction and the *roman à thèse*. So do the constant references to the Orestes story; and to bring Aeschylus into it anyway is surely to bite off rather more than the modern novel can be expected to chew. I am left with the feeling that the book does not quite rise to the level of the questions that it asks, or quite succeed in fusing the theme of justice with the personal tragedy. But this is to judge it by a very high standard; and the fact that this standard suggests itself is an index of Miss Morris' quality. Her very difficult subject is realised with surprising fullness. The political motivation and the social machinery are immediately convincing; Bering's trial in particular is excellently handled. We are not asked to be intimate with the characters, but they are all firmly and economically drawn, and simply as a story the book is absorbing. This is an admirable first novel, and one looks forward to seeing what Miss Morris can do with a setting more localised and actual, and a less unanswerable problem.

GRAHAM HOUGH



# CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

## Television Broadcasting

### DOCUMENTARY

#### Sporting Views

TELEVISION WOULD GAIN in effectiveness and prestige if its presentation methods were more deliberate, more patronising, less imbued with a nondescript desire to please. It is conducted too much on the lines of a manufacturing process concerned primarily to deliver the goods. Bombarding us with its images and impressions, it is in danger of making even less mental impact than the cinema. There, for one thing, it is still possible to capture a sense of occasion, and, for another, the pictures are usually presented as if they are events and not incidents. Too often on television the programmes are jammed tightly together, the final flickerings of the last item almost showing through the title frame of the next in the breathless exertion of keeping to the advertised times.

The result, in terms of a generalisation containing several particles of truth, is that it is remarkably easy to forget what one has seen on television. The impressions have little chance to sink in. They may tickle the fancy, especially of the newcomers for whom all is delightful novelty. They are not easily recalled without effort or reference. The mind is *tabula rasa*, like the screen when the session is done. Conceding that subject is of greater importance than presentation, I commend last week's editorial in *THE LISTENER* to the rulers of television, though it was not explicitly addressed to them. It would be reassuring to know that they had marked well its meaning in a wider context. Prompted by a Home Service talk by the novelist R. C. Hutchinson, printed in the same issue, it added force to his thesis that our minds are being 'geared to a speed which blurs reality'. Television should have no part in that treason.

Except for the sombre hopefulness of Jeanne Heal's interviews with patients from Stoke Mandeville, where spinal injuries are treated, last week's programmes were hardly compounded of the stuff of memorableness. Greyhound racing at Wembley Stadium was put to us as noteworthy for being the first 'live' transmission from a dog track. Not the racing but the asides provided the chief attraction: the somehow unctuous veterinary inspection of the dogs

speedway racing, also from Wembley: something was lost in the complexities between scene and screen, so that fervour was not communicated. Again, the best of the pictures came to us not from the track but from the pits, among the press of overalls and leather jerkins, not to forget the sprockets, a fixation of one of the commentators. The roar of the crowd, it seems, has deteriorated these days into squeals; so much for the roast beef of old Buenos Aires. As at the

greyhound racing, the cameras showed skill in difficult conditions. They were painstakingly alert at the motor racing on Saturday, where they filled in waits by giving us a variety of diverting crowd shots, thanks presumably to a lively directing mind at the other end of their earphones. Raymond Baxter, the commentator there, talked too continuously but at least lucidly; every word was clear above the obtruding engine noises. I should have liked him to supply the occasional benediction of a vocal pause. Like myself, many viewers probably found it hard to believe that the rural setting which appeared on our screens belonged to the Crystal Palace.

Then there was snooker from Leicester Square, the last stages of a championship game with a foregone £1,500 conclusion played in an atmosphere of tepid interest, which now and then evoked a hint of sighing in the voice of the commentator, Sidney Smith. Television, last week, seemed to have taken on the burden of making a final assertion, in the last months of Coronation year, of the nation's sporting instinct. I am tempted to think that we have had a further demonstration of it in the 'Painter's Progress' series, which I understand has brought vanloads of pictures to Alexandra Palace from viewers anxious that their work should be inspected by Mervyn Levy and his helpers. The retention of Hélène Cordet lent charm to the programmes but tiresomely little else. She showed curiously little spirit for the business in hand, compelling the

maestro to interlace his tutorial passages with word-spinning, at which he was smoothly adept but which may not have been part of the contract.

There were reasons for expecting 'Sweet Thames', in the 'London Town' series, to be the programme of the week, pictorially handsome, measured in pace, rich in substance, a pleasure to remember. It was almost entirely spoilt for me by Richard Dimbleby's apparent indifference to what was going on around him. Studio reconstructions merged none too well with the outdoor material, and I conclude that the producer, Stephen McCormack, needs a good talking to by the voice of authority.

REGINALD POUND

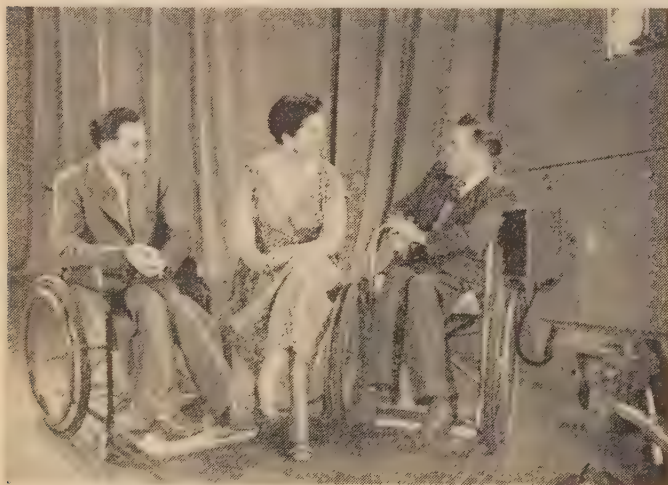
### DRAMA

#### The £12-a-quarter Look

AS WE RACE CRESCENDO to a finale of excitement on yet another Saturday night with an hour of old newsreels, Henry Hall, high jinks at the Proms, and Barrie's curtain-raiser 'The



From 'Brief City' on September 18: a film produced for *The Observer* as a record of the 1951 Festival of Britain on London's South Bank



Jeanne Heal with two patients from the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville, during the television broadcast of September 14

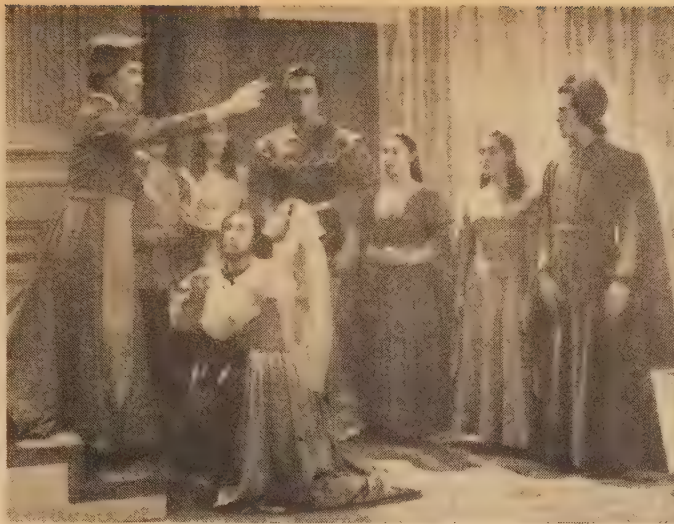
before each race, the witty semaphoring of the tick-tack men, the presentation of a classic cup, and the drifts of raffish hullabaloo that came at us from all sides. As spectacle, the racing offered nothing much, a forty seconds' flash from traps to finish. Peter Dimmock did his cheerful best to whip our attention into enthusiasm, but many of us, I shall assert, found it hard to respond, while being sorry to have failed him. He always seems genuinely concerned to assist not only our understanding but our enjoyment.

The same with the



'Twelve Pound Look', followed by a chart showing how the rain is spreading from the west and (on sound only) a political talking-to—we reflect that it is perhaps a good thing that there is not more television time to fill. People more economically minded than myself must nonetheless feel that their sets (hired or not yet paid for) mock them, empty Punch and Judy shows, for long periods at a time. Noises and shocks from Farnborough, or cricket or tennis is allowed to invade the afternoon: then why not an old Wardour Street shocker at breakfast time or a tenor recitalist before lunch?

No, I do not envy the compilers of our programmes: it must be an appalling strain, the rate at which plays and ballets and operas are burned through. The standbys and 'fillers' of radio—those repeats of discussions, selections of gramophone records by more or less musical film stars, concerts and operas picked up from anywhere on the globe where they happen to be occurring—are resources which television has mostly to deny itself. I am not saying it isn't often very good; there have been occasions when I could honestly join with those of my critical colleagues who are at pains to point out that, for them, the ride on a tram at Blackpool followed by a murder mystery was well worth every penny of the annual licence fee. But that seems like forgetting the initial cost or the hire payments on the machine. And are there really being justified? In the week after the Coronation I suppose the answer would have been 'Yes', over and over again. But in the vasty silence of the silly season one is not so sure. So long as the outside televised programmes are catching all the light and glory, we manage quite happily on thin gruel in this column: but when there is nothing exceptional to make me envious I think gloomily that in drama we *already* seem to be scraping the bottom of the barrel. Edwardian curtain-raisers are all very well in the holiday months, and they suit television and earn their time; but are the new important television plays coming along? It is not, after all, as if the Drama Department could fall back on the classics indefinitely. They might, as the Third Programme did, go all through the Ice-



'Francesca da Rimini', on September 20, with (kneeling) Michel de Lutry as Giovanni Malatesta and Mary Munro in the title-part

landic sagas, but a good many customers would be turning over to refrigerators, I fancy, within a few weeks. Can the Drama Department even give us the minimum of fifty fresh, reasonably good Sunday-night plays in the year? An impresario who thought he could scare up five would be a sanguine fellow. I do not envy Sir Basil Bartlett at all.

Meanwhile, let us look on the bright side; in this lean week there was still Laidman Browne to do the honours to that splendid old bag of tricks, Conan Doyle's 'Waterloo'; there was Gladys Young, great, sound Miss Young, as the plausible murderess in 'The Return of Peggy Atherton'; there was a brave ballet with a bust-up breakdown in it, not at all niminy-piminy Francesca da Rimini; and there was, above all, the last night at the Proms. The heaving cohorts of youthful music lovers, of repellent aspect and endearing heartiness, with their spectacles steamed up with patriotism, their jeering-cheering, their bawling through 'Rule, Britannia' and 'Land of Hope and Glory', their 'We want Paul' (Beard) and 'We want Sidonie' (Goossens), and the musicians bowing and smirking, and the streamers and the flags; a curious approach to art, perhaps, but

interesting. Who started the idea that the English are undemonstrative people with good regular features and well-cut tweeds?

All the Barrie curtain-raisers have been well done, and 'The Twelve Pound Look', the most hackneyed of them, was not an exception. It came up reasonably fresh. So did Mr. Max Miller making his television debut (I understood) in a week during which some people have spied cracks in the thin ice. Mr. Miller crowned, if that is the word, the mild assemblage of variety acts presented by Henry Hall. Mr. Miller looked sometimes like a fish in the wrong tank—or do I mean fishmonger in the wrong shop? The point of Mr. Miller is rather lost in the suburban gentility to which family viewing constrains us all; nor is he at home in those satirical little revues which take place in upholstered sewers in Mayfair. He is a maestro of the Palace, of the big belly laugh, the monster leer, the quite impermissible joke; and a superlative technician. Whether you like the personality is another matter. But he seemed like Ruth Draper in that, if in nothing else, television diminished him.

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE

#### Sound Broadcasting

#### DRAMA

#### Talking Points

ALTHOUGH I HAVE never read 'The Wheel Spins', by Ethel Lina White, I have just listened (Home) to the radio version of the play of the film of the novel. This is 'The Lady Vanishes': whether Miss White's novel has vanished as well, I do not know; but it is clear that the radioplay, on its own account, is uncommonly telling. Its title—though by accident—could hardly have been more topical; and when those massive blitherers, Caldicott and Charters, began their Test Match gossip, one felt right in the middle of things—until, that is, references to Hammond and Grimmeth thrust us into prehistory. It took me five or ten minutes to get sorted. Then, once the Continental train was well away, and Miss Froy,



Scene from 'The Return of Peggy Atherton' on September 20, with Raymond Huntley as Challiss and Gladys Young as Miss Amesbury



'Waterloo', with Patrick Troughton as Sergeant McDonald, Margaret Anderson as Norah Brewster, and Laidman Browne as Corporal Brewster



in her oatmeal tweeds, had vanished, and everyone was trying to persuade an unhappy heroine that she was dreaming and that there had never been a Miss Froy, I settled down with ingenuous enthusiasm to sift the problem. (I daresay there are people still equally excited to know what happens in 'Gammer Gurton's Needle' and 'East Lynne').

As everybody else will remember, the vanishing lady who appears for a while to be on a par with the Indian rope trick, is a British secret agent. Melting into air, swathing in bandages, and the possibility of an enforced hour or two on an operating-table, are among a secret agent's occupational risks. This may be a very tall story; but it is worth the climb, and, amiably, towards the end one does not mind very much what brand of solution the author offers. This one, I gather, involves a secret pact between a pair of Ruritanian states, with a Vital Clause that, for some reason, has to be sung to the Foreign Secretary in Whitehall. Tall, yes—and enjoyable: William Fox, Margaret Lockwood, and the others knew how to while away their journey (rich in train noises), and I liked Gretchen Franklin as an odd character that, no doubt, Mr. Ustinov would call 'th' Illyrian nun'. I look forward now to seeing the film of the radio version of the play of the film of the novel.

Plenty of talking points there; but (I felt strangely) fewer in the far more portentous 'Men and Wives' (Third). Here Ivy Compton-Burnett's novel has been adapted for radio by Peter Mellors and the author herself. A family (period 1889) is at odds; another lady vanishes; talk pours relentlessly. Sometimes it is excellent talk, sometimes self-conscious—one senses the quotation-marks that bristle at the beginning and end of a speech—and through it all a narrative painfully emerges. I found it less exciting in itself than as a test of the speakers' virtuosity: one had less desire to talk about the talk than after, say, Peacock's 'Gryll Grange'. That grand actor, Norman Shelley, was the evening's plum, sounding always as if he were approaching the peroration of a Pronouncement (speech is too mild a word): one recognised the truth of his remark, 'If anybody asked me to make a joke now, on the spur of the moment, I could not do it'. The cast, with Beatrix Lehmann again to harpoon a whale of a Compton-Burnett part, did all it could for us. After regulating the flow of two of these conversational cascades—'A Family and a Fortune', ten months ago, was the first—Christopher Sykes must be established as the Compton-Burnett director.

Mr. Sykes had written, as well as produced, his feature, 'The War Criminal' (Third), a crammed two-hours' study of the trial of Marshal Ney. If at times I murmured with Polonius, 'This is too long', I realised that Mr. Sykes would have every reason to turn, Hamlet-like, and rend me. He has studied his subject from half-title to colophon. The Compton-Burnett play seemed to be full of floating quotation-marks, but the Ney feature seemed to prick with daggers, asterisks, footnotes, and appendices. Still, the very thoroughness of the treatment impressed; Valentine Dyall p'ausibly recreated Ney; and at the end of the evening, a little over-weighted, a little dazed, I sat back feeling that we had missed nothing, and remembered gratefully the sparks of drama. Certainly I was more grateful for 'Ney' than for D. H. Lawrence's dolorous 'The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd' (Home), which, though acted and produced with determination, did not go too well with a stormy night on the Pembrokeshire coast. During the chat over (I believe) the laying-out, I recalled another Shakespearean line about a screech-owl, a shroud, and a wretch that lies in woe.

'As It Was In The Beginning' (Home) was much more impressive: a strongly-felt play, by Naomi Mitchison and the late L. E. Gielgud, about the persecuted Christians and burning Rome. Nero did not arrive—though no doubt he was in waiting above the arena—but Paul did (William Fox having left his Continental train by then), and, surprisingly, Gallio did. For me Cecil Truncer, as Crispus, an honest man beset, was the noblest Roman of them all. His voice might even reconcile me to Nero.

J. C. TREWIN

## THE SPOKEN WORD

### The Art of Talk

AFTER A WEEK'S intensive listening I am confirmed in the not very novel conclusion that The Talk, as an 'art form', is an impossibility—an impossibility which somehow or other the producer has to achieve. The difficulties are notorious and insuperable. It is against nature for one man to talk for twenty minutes without interruption. It is still more fantastic to suppose that if he did he would confine himself to a single theme. Unless his audience consists of students who cannot escape (in which case it is a lecture, not a talk), unless he is talking of something absolutely topical and vital, like say, Sir Edmund Hillary on the ascent of Everest, a normal conversationalist will wander all over the place, going off at a tangent after an interruption, finding new themes and new vigour from some expression of dissent. All good conversation is discursive, which is precisely what broadcasting, intent on finding 'a subject', a title, a *Radio Times* billing, finds it so hard to permit. I have heard no good 'talk', in Dr. Johnson's sense, this week. I have heard addresses on a number of neatly pigeon-holed subjects, and it has been interesting to compare the different techniques with which they were treated.

Dr. James Welch on Sunday spoke about the aspirations of Nigerians for self-government and the attitude we in Britain should take towards them. Dr. Welch is an experienced broadcaster; his talk presumably neither needed nor received much rehearsal. Written, and I mean written, in rather formal and hortatory terms, one felt one understood Africa a little better after it, perhaps more through its obvious sincerity and moving delivery than anything else. The previous evening Major Peter Bryceon gave an account of jungle warfare in Malaya, another competent talk, this time in the category of straightforward reporting.

Contrasted with these were two late evening talks. Late evening is traditionally the time when, all the children being safely in bed, broadcasting can start using really long words, and indeed in the mere matter of difficulty of theme, there was little to choose between Alan Pryce-Jones on 'The Good Life' in the Home Service or Robert Gittings talking about 'John Keats and the Beautiful Mrs. Jones' on the Third. It is not everyone who is capable of feeling passionately concerned about whether the fair but still shadowy Isabella was, or was not, the inspiration of 'The Eve of St. Agnes', but Mr. Gittings brought such zest to the account of his search for clues that even I, whose interest in the minutiae of literary history is slight, was glad when the detective appeared to have proved his case. Mr. Pryce-Jones, on the other hand, I grieve to say, bored me to the point of switching him off. He spoke much too fast, swallowed half his syllables, indulged in sentences too complicated in construction for any audio frequency, all of which, added to a precious and rather finicky voice, was too much for me. There used to be an assumption at Broadcasting House that late evening speakers, since they were presumed to be adults talking to adults, required little or no rehearsing. I am sorry if this belief persists,

because it is quite erroneous. The intellectual whose natural tool is the typewriter will cheerfully break all the canons of good broadcasting, left to himself, nor is consumer-resistance necessarily weaker late at night.

Leaving 'straight' talks for the multi-voice technique, one revealing contrast presented itself. On Sunday, James Fisher's 'Birds in Britain' had almost everything a good magazine programme ought to have, excellent material and good speakers, and it had obviously been most thoroughly prepared and rehearsed. Yet it never quite 'came alive'. I suspect that though everyone was working hard, the well-written script demanded more natural acting capacity than those taking part possessed.

Finally, some hours previously, I had switched on to 'Home Grown', a Roy Hay gardening weekly, renewed acquaintance, and for the first time in the week, with perfect talks broadcasting, beautifully presented and produced. Here at last was the wireless medium being used for what best suits it, and our English tongue spoken racily, naturally, without pomposity or affectation, just as it may be heard any day in any pub or club. Or—shall I say?—*might* be heard, if you were lucky. Behind the very ordinariness of the effect there was considerable art. But we will not go into that now. My entire household, down to the smallest fry, listened breathlessly and in silence while Edward Hyams was handing round those autumn-fruiting strawberries. I can think of no greater tribute.

JOHN PRINGLE

[Mr. Martin Armstrong is away and will resume his articles in a fortnight]

## MUSIC

### Lesser-known Strauss

THE STUDENT of lesser-known Strauss must be grateful to the B.B.C. for broadcasting in entirety all three operas in the short current season at Covent Garden given by the Bavarian State Opera. But only the most assiduous student would have persevered to the end of 'Die Liebe der Danae', the first of the three to be transmitted, for as radio entertainment, judged without knowledge of what was going on in the opera-house itself, much of it was meaningless. This 'cheerful mythology', not always handled sufficiently cheerfully by either composer or librettist, is complicated enough on the stage. Divorced from the stage, the number of subplots, transformations, disguises, dialogues at cross-purposes becomes bewildering. A skilful synopsis (by Andrew Porter) was read at the beginning of each act but who could remember all the details of the four scenes of Act 1, presented *en bloc*?

Musically, both Acts I and II open with promising sparkle, have occasional good pages thereafter, but too much that is flabby and tired. The passionate waltz-tune, on which the love duet between Danae and Midas in Act II is based, is hardly out of the top drawer, even the Straussian top drawer. On the other hand their duet in Act III—'So führ ich dich mit sanfter Hand ins neue, in der Liebe Land!'—is a wonderful example of Strauss' later and simpler style of writing (this was his penultimate opera): this diatonic piece shows how affecting Strauss could be when on form, without the aid of *Kitsch*. Perhaps because this last act contains a higher proportion of good music, the singing of the principals, which had not been at all exceptional in quality, warmed up noticeably.

As a prelude to the Bavarian company's visit, the B.B.C. presented another little-known Strauss opera, 'Die Frau ohne Schatten' ('The Woman without a Shadow'), first produced in 1919. Apart from being the stronger score, this had the advantage from the listener's point of view of being transmitted from a recorded concert



version given at the Vienna Music Festival last June. Not only was it possible to get a better balance of the voices (including such distinguished ones as Set Svanholm, Eleanor Steber, and Elisabeth Höngen) than is usually feasible at a theatrical and thus mobile performance; but also there was no problem in interpolating at appropriately frequent breaks a synopsis of the short section to follow, so that the listener could follow the story fairly easily.

But what a story! It is no wonder the opera is unknown here. This is symbolism run riot, the 'shadow' being a symbol of ability to bear children, the Empress without a shadow seeking to borrow that of another woman (the poor Dyer's wife) but being shaken in her quest by the mystic wailings of unborn children—i.e. the Dyer's—crying to be let in. It was difficult to suppress an embarrassed giggle at the final transformation scene where the 'shadow' turns into

a golden bridge and provides the locale for a rapturous meeting of the now reunited Dyer and his wife. 'Shadows for all' is clearly the motto of these proceedings, which Strauss has clothed with rich and powerful music, worthy of a less jejune story.

As an antidote to excess of Strauss' luxuriance, I can think of none better than the astringent yet attractive music of Alan Rawsthorne whose Cello Sonata, his best chamber work, was broadcast at the improbable hour of 9 a.m. in the Home Service. It never ceases to amaze me that artists are able to perform so well at this hour (the young cellist in this instance, Brigitte Loeser, had an especially fine, mellifluous tone in the upper register).

Another striking, modern cello sonata was well played in a 'New Music' programme by William Pleeth and Margaret Good, who were not daunted by its obviously considerable difficulties.

This was by an American composer, Burrill Phillips, an unfamiliar name here. It is a work of distinctive character, virile yet lyrical, with an attractive flow not only in its slow movement but more surprisingly in its decidedly rhythmic fast movements, which were, however, a shade on the long side.

A further hearing of Rubbra's Viola Concerto, played by William Primrose during the last week of the Proms, confirmed my earlier impression that this is one of his most enjoyable works, having more outward attractiveness than is customary in this composer. I also enjoyed what was a complete novelty for me—Gounod's First Symphony, played by the lively B.B.C. Scottish Orchestra under Alexander Gibson. Here Gounod sought not to uplift but purely to entertain, and the first two movements particularly were deft and pretty.

ALAN FRANK

## The French Revelation

By NORMAN SUCKLING

The first of a series of programmes of French pianoforte music will be broadcast at 10.10 p.m. on Wednesday, September 30 (Third)

WHEN W. J. Turner wrote that 'the function of art is to reveal the soul of man', he would have been surprised if anyone had taken up his challenge and pointed out that he was not really demonstrating the point he desired to make—that, on the contrary, the intellectual and 'decorative' art of the great modern French masters reveals quite as much of what is valuable in human spirituality as the stirring of personal emotions such as he admired in his own musical heroes—and probably more. So far as I know, his challenge was not taken up, in print at any rate; for he wrote at a time when English musical opinion was again falling short of the enlightenment it had begun to attain under the influence of just those French masters. People were saying over again, as they had commonly said in the nineteenth century, either that they wished music to elevate and inspire them or that it was their solace and relief from the burden of stern reality.

The best French music—and indeed the best music in general—is neither of these things. Only a seriously vitiated taste could suppose that the work of Fauré, Debussy, or Ravel is any the worse for having no immediate bearing on the joys and cares of sublunary humanity, or that their music, reflecting an intellectual sense of our human condition and of the decoration we may bring to it, is of an inferior order to an art arising out of a concern either to meet or to avoid the urgencies of life. The reverse is rather the case; the best music is an expression of what we know rather than of what we are impelled to do or to seek respite from doing. Like any other art, music is most truly artistic when it is unrelated to 'vital urges'.

Paul Valéry wrote that music corresponded with 'forms of our sensibility whose property is to arise rather than to succeed'; and Albert Thibaudet added in comment that music is a prefiguration of 'the downward slope of the world'—a guide, that is, to those aspects of reality whose value has nothing to do with the unfolding of that reality in its vital continuity, nothing to do with any 'directing of nature towards its end', but valuable to us all the more because the insight they afford us into the conditions of our active task may render us less fit for its performance. French music could never be interpreted as the revelation or the recreation of a people whose dominant character-

istic in extra-musical life was the will to power. It expresses rather the knowledge that our active constructiveness will leave things all the same at the end of the proverbial thousand years (*la nullité certaine finale*, to quote Valéry again) and that the constructions really worth undertaking are those whose function is exhausted by our apprehension of them, and which are all the more closely allied with eternity because in a temporal sense they are no more than momentary.

This is the golden thread running through the web of French music from Saint-Saëns to Poulenc. Saint-Saëns, in spite of his superfluities, is a not unworthy herald of the great age for the very reason that, as Romain Rolland said, he would probably have appeared to Goethe to be lacking in 'daemonism'. He wrote for the most part, we may admit, in what Mr. Wilfrid Mellers called an 'emasculated academic manner', but at least his roots were more in the eighteenth century with its understanding of the artistic irrelevance of 'urgent problems' than in the nineteenth with its alternate over-emphasis on these problems and futile escape from them; like all his great successors he was capable of ironic detachment from the phenomena which occasioned his productivity. Even more is the best of Satie (the 'Gymnopédies' or the Nocturnes) a perfect illustration of what went out of music when the Germans took it over. Vincent d'Indy, though his notion of the composer as something between a guildsman and a missionary too much suggests the *artiste engagé*, still has a claim on our gratitude in that he helped to recall his countrymen to an art which was *recueilli* and away from the state of dependency on extra-musical life implied in both 'realistic' and 'escape' music. And in Chabrier it is perhaps a sign of the same detachment from the urgencies of vital continuity that he could, on the one hand, identify himself with 'light' music without falling into the vulgarity of a Johann Strauss, and, on the other, give this light music *droit de cité* in the world of art without the pretentiousness of the same Strauss as conducted by Furtwängler.

The great names in this chapter of the history of music are, of course, those of Fauré and Debussy, and of both there is much more to say than can be said here, excellently though both may be represented by their pianoforte compositions. Suffice it to note that Fauré found the

characteristic piece for piano given over (in spite of the example of Chopin and Schumann at their best) to a kind of lyricism as insignificant as the poetry of the keepsake-album, and that he left it—independently of Brahms and before the Russians—capable of carrying as great an import as the sonata of an earlier period. Debussy in his turn found music still labouring under the supposed necessity of a restriction to the obviously *gemütlich* or *affettuoso* moods (known as 'normal human emotions') and completed its transformation into a type of expression susceptible of many states of mind all the more worthy to be recorded in art for having no bearing on the issues of life outside art, whether as a direct 'inspiration to action' or as an indirect 'relief from stern reality'. In the work of both these masters 'stern reality'—of the kind which is important only to those who cannot see beyond immediate consequences—is neither insisted upon nor protested against; it is irrelevant.

A similar comment is appropriate, in the last resort, to most other composers of this phase of French art. Ravel has left works which prove beyond a doubt that the 'decorative' in music is more than just 'charming'—charm is an overrated quality, especially, as Dr. Leavis said, when it is preferred to maturity—that it is in fact of a spiritual significance at least equal to that of the 'earnest' or the 'soulful' and 'palpitating'. While of Roussel it may be said that he, more than any other composer, has pointed out the way for French music to take after the uncertainty inevitably following so complete an achievement as that of Fauré and Debussy.

The remoteness of some of their characteristic work elicited from Jean Cocteau a protest in favour of *une musique sur laquelle on marche*; but it is Roussel of all musicians who has profited by the example of the earlier generation to the exact extent of his *not* having needed to revolt from it. His work helps to show that the deliberate commonplace sometimes affected by Milhaud, no less than the ecstasies of Messiaen, is a needless deviation from the quality of French music at its best; and the half-century from which the bulk of the programmes here in question has been drawn proves the inutility of M. Cocteau's argument in the face of an artistic achievement which had falsified its conclusion in advance.



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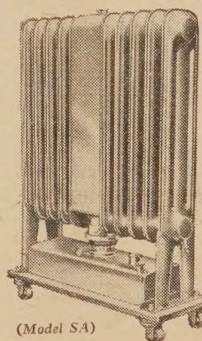
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When you cut open the peppers, you will find inside a number of hard little seeds which grow mostly up at the stalk end. They are easy to cut out. If you want to leave the pepper whole, cut round the stalk with a sharp-pointed knife; the core, with most of the seeds, can be pulled out.

Try them first cut into strips and eaten raw with a lettuce salad. And I like them used, raw again, in another kind of salad. Chop or shred very finely the white heart of a cabbage, celery, chives, or onions, and some peppers—about 1 lb. in all—and set in a ring mould with  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of gelatine dissolved in 1 gill of hot water and 2 tablespoons of vinegar. Then, when the mould is turned on to a dish, fill the centre hole with salad dressing, or more substantially with rolls of ham or cold meat, or hard-boiled egg.

Another way to use peppers is to stuff them, and this uses up that odd 3-4 ounces of meat left from the joint. Mince or chop up the meat, and mix it with cooked rice, finely chopped fried onion, and some chopped, skinned tomatoes. I also like to mix in a little left-over gravy or brown sauce. Stand them upright in a saucepan so that the stuffing does not ooze out, and pour over, for four peppers, about  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 pint of tomato sauce, made by sieving fresh tomatoes or diluting a tin of tomato puree. Cover the pan and allow

the sauce to simmer for half an hour. This dish can be made at any time and reheated.

MONICA MAWSON

## MAKING SHORT PASTRY

Recipes vary for short crust, but to my mind, the ideal proportions for the best simple crust are half quantities of fat to the quantity of flour—8 oz. flour, 4 oz. fat, using, of course, plain flour. If you use less than half quantities, you must use self-raising flour or add baking powder, and the result is not anything like as good. It is the amount of fat that gives the degree of shortness. A mixture of lard and margarine makes the lightest pastry. It should be rubbed in with the finger tips, until it is like fine bread-crumbs. In rubbing it in, one should keep lifting it lightly in the bowl, allowing it to sift back through the fingers. This introduces cold air, and the more the better—for air, being a mixture of gases, will expand in the oven and lighten your pastry. This is one of the reasons for sieving the flour.

Only the smallest quantity of water should be used to blend good short crust: 'only use what water you must, the stiffer the dough the shorter the crust'. But this applies only when you use at least half quantities of fat. If less than half quantities are used then more water is necessary and, of course, the pastry is not so short.

Rolling is another important part of the operation. All pastry must be rolled in one direction only—short, sharp, forward rolls, very lightly handled—and the minimum of flour sprinkled

on the board. Excessive flour alters the proportions and this, together with heavy rolling, produces a tough, hard pastry. Too much water also produces that leathery effect.

ANN HARDY

## Notes on Contributors

SIR JOHN SLESSOR, G.C.B. (page 487): Marshal of the Royal Air Force; Commandant Imperial Defence College 1948-49; C.-in-C. R.A.F., Mediterranean and Middle East 1944-45; A.O.C.-in-C. Coastal Command, 1943; Director of Plans, Air Ministry, 1937-41; author of *Air Power and Armies*

DENIS BROGAN (page 489): Professor of Political Science, Cambridge University; author of *The Era of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, *American Themes*, *The American Political System*, etc.

ALAN PRYCE-JONES (page 495): editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*; author of *Private Opinion*, *Twenty-Seven Poems*, *Beethoven*, etc.

W. G. HOSKINS (page 496): Reader in Economic History, Oxford University; author of *Devonshire Studies* (with H. P. R. Finberg), *Essays in Leicestershire History*, etc.

SIR HUGH CASSON (page 501): Professor in Interior Design, Royal College of Art, since 1951; consultant architect to Westminster City Council for Coronation street decorations; author of *Victorian Architecture*, *Bombed Churches*, etc.

GRAHAM HOUGH (page 517): Lecturer in English, Cambridge University; author of *The Last Romantics: Ruskin to Yeats*

## Crossword No. 1,221.

## Penny Plain.

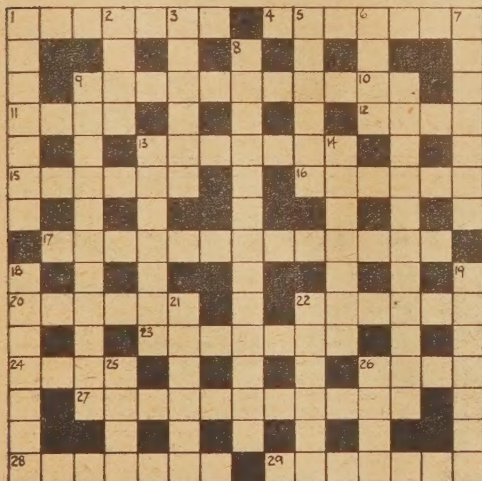
## By Altair

Prizes (for the first three correct solutions opened): Book tokens, value 30s., 21s., and 12s. 6d. respectively

Closing date: First post on Thursday, October 1

### CLUES—ACROSS

1. Locates costmary (7).
4. Wretched little Alec in the grip of a mollusc (7).



9. Richard Babley's aerial diversion (11, two words).
11. Surrey's conic section (4).
12. Transaction often indicated by a star (4).
13. Not baby's Biro (7, two words).
15. May be found in the throes (6).
16. G. Bramwell Evens as B.B.C. fans remember him (6).
17. Does not imply that Miss Bell is amorously impudent (13, four words).
20. Better to kick balls in the air (6).
22. Slippery mud with a nice patch of grass in the middle (6).
23. Little enemy of Matthew Arnold's 'Poor Matthias' (7, two words).
24. Made into Dutch cheese (4).
26. John — lived at Troutbeck once on a day (4).
27. Remaining home of cowboys and Indians (11, two words).
28. Our army in an American drill-hall (7).
29. One cannot see things out of this (7).

### DOWN

1. If this lady cuts you, you need worry no more (7).
2. Visit in suit (4).
3. Victorian lighters (6).
5. No great shake in Cupid's case (6).
6. Cut in two adds to their total (4).
7. Dick was a Gilbertian blockhead (7).
8. In spite of appearances they're all right (13, two words).
9. 18's dad missed being Hamlet's (11, hyphens).
10. Copernican organisation (11, two words).

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

13. — John was a Kaffir king and Christian minister, according to Buchan (7).
14. Eminent perhaps, but clearly no first class sailor (7).
18. See 9 (7).
19. Naval reserve in Surrey town (7).
21. Specialist in wiring (6).
22. If Josephine married 7 she envisaged a backstreet with such children crying (6).
25. A short note (4).
26. Crossword? (4).

## Solution of No. 1,219

A	29	27	13	11	3	28
B	30	36	15	5	18	7
C	25	17	6	16	35	12
D	14	2	21	31	20	23
E	4	19	32	22	1	33
F	9	10	24	26	34	8

### NOTES

(Clues in order of their occurrence): 13: Ben Jonson; 'Epitaph on Salathiel Pavy'; 29: Latitude; 27: At, wt. of aluminum = 26.97; 28: see under 'perfect' in *Chambers' Twentieth Century Dictionary*; 11: sq. rt. of 121; 15: snooker; 18: golf; 36: age at death; 5: see Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*; 7: 6; 12: 35; *The 39 Steps*; 25: snooker; 16: John 3; 16; 21: sum of pips on faces of a die; 2: 'Two Gentlemen of Verona'; 23: anag.; 14: Valentine's Day; 20: 'score'; 19: impossible score at crib; 33: 66 Books in Bible; 4: fourgon; 1: 'No. 1, London'; 22: 'Spurs' Football Ground; 26; 10: 'Upper ten'; 34: anag.; 9: D. L. Sayers' *The 9 Tailors*; 24: sheets in quire, blackbirds in pie.

'Tiber' wishes to thank solvers who point out that six variants of the solution are possible by permuting 11, 13, and 27 in row A (six ways) and by shifting 26, 24, and 10 in row F correspondingly.

Prizewinners: 1st prize: T. C. Askey (Reigate); 2nd prize: E. S. Ainley (Harrow); 3rd prize: R. P. Bolton (Birkenhead)



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